

THE  
ODYSSEY OF HOMER



*TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE*

BY

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

VOLUME I.



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## PREFACE.

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THE kind reception which my translation of the Iliad has met with from my countrymen has encouraged me to attempt a translation of the Odyssey in the same form of verse. I have found this a not unpleasing employment for a period of life which admonishes me that I cannot many times more appear before the public in this or any other manner. The task of translating verse is not, it is true, merely mechanical, since it requires that the translator should catch from his author somewhat of the glow with which he wrote, just as a good reader is himself moved by the words which he delivers, and communicates the emotion to his hearers; yet is the translator spared the labor of invention,—the task of producing the ideas which it is his business to express, as well as that of bringing them into their proper relations with each other. A great part of the fatigue which attends original composition, long pursued, is therefore avoided, and this gentler exercise of the intellectual faculties agrees better with that stage of life when the brain begins to be haunted by a presentiment that the time of its final repose is not far off.

Some of the observations which I have made, in my Preface to the Iliad, on that work and the translation which I have made of it, apply also to the Odyssey and to the version which I now lay before the reader.

The differences between the two poems have been so well pointed out by critics, that I shall have occasion to speak of but two or three of them. In executing my task, I have certainly missed in the *Odyssey* the fire and vehemence of which I was so often sensible in the *Iliad*, and the effect of which naturally was to kindle the mind of the translator. I hope that the version which I have made will not on that account be found lacking in a sufficient degree of spirit and appearance of freedom to make it readable. Another peculiarity of the *Iliad*, of a less agreeable nature, consists in the frequent recurrence of hand-to-hand combats, in which the more eminent warriors despatch, by the most summary butchery, and with a fierce delight in their own prowess, their weaker adversaries. These incidents so often occur in the narrative, being thrown together in clusters, and described with an unsparing minuteness, that I have known persons, soon sated with these horrors, to pass over the pages in which they are described, and take up the narrative further on. There is nothing of this kind in the *Odyssey*, at least until near the close, where Ulysses takes a bloody vengeance on the suitors who have plundered his estate, and conspired to take the life of his son, and in that part of the poem the horror which so enormous a slaughter would naturally awaken is mitigated by the recollection of their guilt. The gods of the *Odyssey* are not so often moved by brutal impulses as those of the *Iliad*, nor do they seem to dwell in a sphere so far removed from the recognition of those rules of right and wrong which are respected in human society. In the composition of the two poems, one of the most remarkable differences is the abundance of similes in the *Iliad*, and their comparatively rare appearance in the *Odyssey*. In the *Iliad*



the desire of illustrating his subject by a similitude sometimes seizes the poet in the midst of one of the most interesting parts of his narrative, and immediately there follows a striking picture of some incident bearing a certain resemblance to the one which he is relating. Sometimes, after one simile is minutely given, a second suggests itself, and is given with equal minuteness, and there is one instance at least of a third. It is curious to mark what a fascination the picturesque resemblance of objects and incidents has for the poet, and how one set of these images draws after it another, passing in magnificent procession across the mirror of his imagination. In the *Odyssey* are comparatively few examples of this mode of illustration; the poet is too much occupied with his narrative to think of them. How far this point of difference between the two poems tends to support the view of those who maintain that they could not have proceeded from the same author, is a question on which it is not my purpose to enter.

In the Preface to my version of the *Iliad*, I gave very briefly my reason for preserving the names derived from the Latin, by which the deities of the Grecian mythology have hitherto been known to English readers,—that is to say, Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, Pluto, Mars, Venus, and the rest, instead of Zeus, Herè, and the other names which are properly Greek. As the propriety of doing this is questioned by some persons of exact scholarship, I will state the argument a little more at large. The names I have employed have been given to the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece from the very beginnings of our language. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and the rest, down to Proctor and Keats,—a list whose chronology extends through six hundred years,—have followed

this usage, and we may even trace it back for centuries before either of them wrote. Our prose writers have done the same thing; the names of Latin derivation have been adopted by the earliest and latest translators of the New Testament. To each of the deities known by these names there is annexed in the mind of the English reader — and it is for the English reader that I have made this translation — a peculiar set of attributes. Speak of Juno and Diana, and the mere English reader understands you at once; but when he reads the names of Herè and Artemis, he looks into his classical dictionary. The names of Latin origin are naturalized; the others are aliens and strangers. The conjunction *and* itself, which has been handed down to us unchanged from our Saxon ancestors, holds not its place in our language by a firmer and more incontestable title than the names which we have hitherto given to the deities of ancient Greece. We derive this usage from the Latin authors, — from Virgil, and Horace, and Ovid, and the prose writers of ancient Rome. Art as well as poetry knows these deities by the same names. We talk of the Venus de Medicis, the Venus of Milo, the Jupiter of Phidias, and never think of calling a statue of Mars a statue of Ares.

For my part, I am satisfied with the English language as it has been handed down to us. If the lines of my translation had bristled with the names of Zeus and Herè, and Poseidon and Ares, and Artemis and Demeter, I should feel that I had departed from the immemorial usage of the English tongue, that I had introduced obscurity where the meaning should have been plain, and that I had given just cause of complaint to the readers for whom I wrote.

W. C. BRYANT.

AUGUST, 1871.

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THE ODYSSEY.





# THE ODYSSEY.



## BOOK I.

TELL me, O Muse, of that sagacious man  
Who, having overthrown the sacred town  
Of Ilium, wandered far and visited  
The capitals of many nations, learned  
The customs of their dwellers, and endured      5  
Great suffering on the deep ; his life was oft  
In peril, as he labored to bring back  
His comrades to their homes. He saved them not,  
Though earnestly he strove ; they perished all,  
Through their own folly ; for they banqueted,      10  
Madmen ! upon the oxen of the Sun, —  
The all-o'erlooking Sun, who cut them off  
From their return. O goddess, virgin-child  
Of Jove, relate some part of this to me.

Now all the rest, as many as escaped      15  
The cruel doom of death, were at their homes  
Safe from the perils of the war and sea,  
While him alone, who pined to see his home  
And wife again, Calypso, queenly nymph,

Great among goddesses, detained within 20  
Her spacious grot, in hope that he might yet  
Become her husband. Even when the years  
Brought round the time in which the gods decreed  
That he should reach again his dwelling-place  
In Ithaca, though he was with his friends, 25  
His toils were not yet ended. Of the gods  
All pitied him save Neptune, who pursued  
With wrath implacable the godlike chief,  
Ulysses, even to his native land.

Among the Ethiopians was the god 30  
Far off, — the Ethiopians most remote  
Of men. Two tribes there are ; one dwells beneath  
The rising, one beneath the setting sun.  
He went to grace a hecatomb of beeves  
And lambs, and sat delighted at the feast ; 35  
While in the palace of Olympian Jove  
The other gods assembled, and to them  
The father of immortals and of men  
Was speaking. To his mind arose the thought  
Of that Ægisthus whom the famous son 40  
Of Agamemnon, Prince Orestes, slew.  
Of him he thought and thus bespake the gods : —

“ How strange it is that mortals blame the gods  
And say that we inflict the ills they bear,  
When they, by their own folly and against 45  
The will of fate, bring sorrow on themselves !  
As late Ægisthus, unconstrained by fate,  
Married the queen of Atreus’ son and slew

The husband just returned from war. Yet well  
He knew the bitter penalty, for we 50  
Warned him. We sent the herald Argicide,  
Bidding him neither slay the chief nor woo  
His queen, for that Orestes, when he came  
To manhood and might claim his heritage,  
Would take due vengeance for Atrides slain. 55  
So Hermes said ; his prudent words moved not  
The purpose of Ægisthus, who now pays  
The forfeit of his many crimes at once."

Pallas, the blue-eyed goddess, thus replied : —  
" O father, son of Saturn, king of kings ! 60  
Well he deserved his death. So perish all  
Guilty of deeds like his ! But I am grieved  
For sage Ulysses, that most wretched man,  
So long detained, repining, and afar  
From those he loves, upon a distant isle 65  
Girt by the waters of the central deep, —  
A forest isle, where dwells a deity  
The daughter of wise Atlas, him who knows  
The ocean to its utmost depths, and holds  
Upright the lofty columns which divide 70  
The earth from heaven. The daughter there detains  
The unhappy chieftain, and with flattering words  
Would win him to forget his Ithaca.  
Meanwhile, impatient to behold the smokes  
That rise from hearths in his own land, he pines 75  
And willingly would die. Is not thy heart,  
Olympius, touched by this ? And did he not

Pay grateful sacrifice to thee beside  
The Argive fleet in the broad realm of Troy ?  
Why then, O Jove, art thou so wroth with him ?” 80

Then answered cloud-compelling Jove : “ My  
child,

What words have passed thy lips ? Can I forget  
Godlike Ulysses, who in gifts of mind  
Excels all other men, and who has brought  
Large offerings to the gods that dwell in heaven ? 85  
Yet he who holds the earth in his embrace,  
Neptune, pursues him with perpetual hate  
Because of Polypheme, the Cyclops, strong  
Beyond all others of his giant race,  
Whose eye Ulysses had put out. The nymph 90  
Thoosa brought him forth, — a daughter she  
Of Phorcys, ruling in the barren deep, —  
And in the covert of o’erhanging rocks  
She met with Neptune. For this cause the god  
Who shakes the shores, although he slay him not, 95  
Sends forth Ulysses wandering far away  
From his own country. Let us now consult  
Together and provide for his return,  
And Neptune will lay by his wrath, for vain  
It were for one like him to strive alone 100  
Against the might of all the immortal gods.”

And then the blue-eyed Pallas spake again : —  
“ O father ! son of Saturn, king of kings !  
If such the pleasure of the blessed gods  
That now the wise Ulysses shall return 105

To his own land, let us at once despatch  
Hermes, the Argicide, our messenger,  
Down to Ogygia, to the bright-haired nymph,  
And make our steadfast purpose known to bring  
The sufferer Ulysses to his home, 110  
And I will haste to Ithaca, and move  
His son, that with a resolute heart he call  
The long-haired Greeks together and forbid  
The excesses of the suitor train, who slay  
His flocks and slow-paced beeves with crooked  
horns. 115

To Sparta I will send him and the sands  
Of Pylos, to inquire for the return  
Of his dear father. So a glorious fame  
Shall gather round him in the eyes of men."

She spake, and fastened underneath her feet 120  
The fair, ambrosial golden sandals worn  
To bear her over ocean like the wind,  
And o'er the boundless land. In hand she took,  
Well tipped with trenchant brass, the mighty spear,  
Heavy and huge and strong, with which she bears 125  
Whole phalanxes of heroes to the earth,  
When she, the daughter of a mighty sire,  
Is angered. From the Olympian heights she  
plunged,  
And stood among the men of Ithaca,  
Just at the porch and threshold of their chief, 130  
Ulysses. In her hand she bore the spear,  
And seemed the stranger Mentès, he who led

The Taphians. There before the gate she found  
The haughty suitors. Some beguiled the time 134  
With draughts, while sitting on the hides of beeves  
Which they had slaughtered. Herald's were with  
them,

And busy menials : some who in the bowls  
Tempered the wine with water, some who cleansed  
The tables with light sponges, and who set  
The banquet forth and carved the meats for all. 140

Telemachus the godlike was the first  
To see the goddess as he sat among  
The crowd of suitors, sad at heart, and thought  
Of his illustrious father, who might come  
And scatter those who filled his palace halls, 145  
And win new honor, and regain the rule  
Over his own. As thus he sat and mused  
Among the suitors, he beheld where stood  
Pallas, and forth he sprang ; he could not bear  
To keep a stranger waiting at his door. 150

He came, and taking her right hand received  
The brazen spear, and spake these winged words :—  
“ Hail, stranger ! thou art truly welcome here ;  
First come and share our feast and be refreshed,  
Then say what thou requirest at our hands.” 155

He spake and led the way, and in his steps  
Pallas Athenè followed. Entering then  
The lofty halls, he set the spear upright  
By a tall column, in the armory  
With polished walls, where rested many a lance 160

Of the large-souled Ulysses. Then he placed  
His guest upon a throne, o'er which he spread  
A covering many-hued and beautiful,  
And gave her feet a footstool. Near to her  
He drew his party-colored seat, aloof 165  
From where the suitors sat ; that so his guest  
Might not amid those haughty revellers  
Be wearied with the tumult and enjoy  
His meal the less, and that himself might ask  
News of his absent father. In a bowl 170  
Of silver, from a shapely ewer of gold,  
A maid poured water for the hands, and set  
A polished table near them. Then approached  
A venerable matron bringing bread  
And delicacies gathered from the board ; 175  
And he who served the feast before them placed  
Chargers with various meats, and cups of gold ;  
While round the board a herald moved, and poured  
Wine for the guests. The haughty suitors now  
Came in, and took their places on the thrones 180  
And couches ; heralds poured upon their hands  
The water ; maidens heaped the canisters  
With bread, and all put forth their hands to share  
The banquet on the board, while to the brim  
Boys filled the beakers. When the calls of thirst 185  
And hunger were appeased, the suitors thought  
Of other things that well become a feast, —  
Song and the dance. And then a herald brought  
A shapely harp, and gave it to the hands

Of Phemius, who had only by constraint 190  
Sung to the suitors. On the chords he struck  
A prelude to his lay, while, as he played,  
Telemachus, that others might not hear,  
Leaned forward, and to blue-eyed Pallas spake : —

“My friend and guest, wilt thou take no offence 195  
At what I say? These revellers enjoy  
The harp and song, for at no cost of theirs  
They waste the substance of another man,  
Whose white bones now are mouldering in the rain  
Upon some main-land, or are tossed about 200  
By ocean billows. Should they see him once  
In Ithaca, their prayers would rather rise  
For swifter feet than richer stores of gold  
And raiment. But an evil fate is his,  
And he has perished. Even should we hear 205  
From any of the dwellers upon earth  
That he is near at hand, we could not hope.  
For him is no return. But now, I pray,  
Tell me, and frankly tell me, who thou art,  
And of what race of men, and where thy home, 210  
And who thy parents ; how the mariners  
Brought thee to Ithaca, and who they claim  
To be, for well I deem thou couldst not come  
Hither on foot. All this, I pray, relate  
Truly, that I may know the whole. Art thou 215  
For the first time arrived, or hast thou been  
My father’s guest? for many a stranger once  
Resorted to our palace, and he knew



The way to win the kind regard of men." 219

Pallas, the blue-eyed goddess, answered thus :—

"I will tell all and truly. I am named  
Mentes ; my father was the great in war  
Anchialus. I rule a people skilled  
To wield the oar, the Taphians, and I come  
With ship and crew across the dark blue deep 225

To Temesè, and to a race whose speech  
Is different from my own, in quest of brass,  
And bringing bright steel with me. I have left  
Moored at the field behind the town my bark,  
Within the bay of Reithrus, and beneath 230

The woods of Neius. We claim to be  
Guests by descent, and from our fathers' time,  
As thou wilt learn if thou shouldst meet and ask  
Laertes, the old hero. It is said

He comes no more within the city walls, 235

But in the fields dwells sadly by himself,  
Where an old handmaid sets upon his board  
His food and drink when weariness unnerves  
His limbs in creeping o'er the fertile soil

Of his rich vineyard. I am come because 240

I heard thy father had at last returned,  
And now am certain that the gods delay  
His journey hither ; for the illustrious man  
Cannot have died, but is detained alone

Somewhere upon the ocean, in some spot 245

Girt by the waters. There do cruel men  
And savage keep him, pining to depart.

Now let me speak of what the gods reveal,  
And what I deem will surely come to pass,  
Although I am no seer and have no skill 250  
In omens drawn from birds. Not long the chief  
Will be an exile from his own dear land,  
Though fettered to his place by links of steel ;  
For he has large invention, and will plan  
A way for his escape. Now tell me this, 255  
And truly ; tall in stature as thou art,  
Art thou in fact Ulysses' son ? In face  
And glorious eyes thou dost resemble him  
Exceedingly ; for he and I of yore  
Were oftentimes companions, ere he sailed 260  
For Ilium, whither also went the best  
Among the Argives in their roomy ships,  
Nor have we seen each other since that day."

Telemachus, the prudent, spake : " O guest,  
True answer shalt thou have. My mother says 265  
I am his son ; I know not ; never man  
Knew his own father. Would I were the son  
Of one whose happier lot it was to meet  
Amidst his own estates the approach of age.  
Now the most wretched of the sons of men 270  
Is he to whom they say I owe my birth.  
Thus is thy question answered." Then again  
Spake blue-eyed Pallas : " Of a truth, the gods  
Ordain not that thy race, in years to come,  
Should be inglorious, since Penelope 275  
Hath borne thee such as I behold thee now.

But frankly answer me, — what feast is here,  
And what is this assembly? What may be  
The occasion? is a banquet given? is this  
A wedding? A collation, where the guests 280  
Furnish the meats, I think it cannot be,  
So riotously goes the revel on  
Throughout the palace. A well-judging man,  
If he should come among them, would be moved  
With anger at the shameful things they do.” 285

Again Telemachus, the prudent, spake : —  
“ Since thou dost ask me, stranger, know that once  
Rich and illustrious might this house be called  
While yet the chief was here. But now the gods  
Have grown unkind and willed it otherwise, 290  
They make his fate a mystery beyond  
The fate of other men. I should not grieve  
So deeply for his loss if he had fallen  
With his companions on the field of Troy,  
Or midst his kindred when the war was o’er. 295  
Then all the Greeks had built his monument,  
And he had left his son a heritage  
Of glory. Now has he become the prey  
Of Harpies, perishing ingloriously,  
Unseen, his fate unheard of, and has left 300  
Mourning and grief, my portion. Not for him  
Alone I grieve ; the gods have cast on me  
Yet other hardships. All the chiefs who rule  
The isles, Dulichium, Samos, and the groves  
That shade Zacynthus, and who bear the sway 305

In rugged Ithaca, have come to woo  
My mother, and from day to day consume  
My substance. She rejects not utterly  
Their hateful suit, and yet she cannot bear  
To end it by a marriage. Thus they waste 310  
My heritage, and soon will seek my life."

Again in grief and anger Pallas spake : —  
" Yea, greatly dost thou need the absent chief  
Ulysses here, that he might lay his hands  
Upon these shameless suitors. Were he now 315  
To come and stand before the palace gate  
With helm and buckler and two spears, as first  
I saw him in our house, when drinking wine  
And feasting, just returned from Ephyre,  
Where Ilus dwelt, the son of Mermerus, — 320  
For thither went Ulysses in a bark,  
To seek a deadly drug with which to taint  
His brazen arrows ; Ilus gave it not ;  
He feared the immortal gods ; my father gave  
The poison, for exceedingly he loved 325  
His guest, — could now Ulysses, in such guise,  
Once meet the suitors, short would be their lives  
And bitter would the marriage banquet be.  
Yet whether he return or not to take  
Vengeance, in his own palace, on this crew 330  
Of wassailers, rests only with the gods.  
Now let me counsel thee to think betimes  
How thou shalt thrust them from thy palace gates.  
Observe me, and attend to what I say :

To-morrow thou shalt call the Achaian chiefs 335  
To an assembly ; speak before them all,  
And be the gods thy witnesses. Command  
The suitors all to separate for their homes ;  
And if thy mother's mind be bent to wed,  
Let her return to where her father dwells, 340  
A mighty prince, and there they will appoint  
Magnificent nuptials, and an ample dower  
Such as should honor a beloved child.  
And now, if thou wilt heed me, I will give  
A counsel for thy good. Man thy best ship 345  
With twenty rowers, and go forth to seek  
News of thy absent father. Thou shalt hear  
Haply of him from some one of the sons  
Of men, or else some word of rumor sent  
By Jove, revealing what mankind should know. 350  
First shape thy course for Pylos, and inquire  
Of noble Nestor ; then, at Sparta, ask  
Of fair-haired Menelaus, for he came  
Last of the mailed Achaians to his home.  
And shouldst thou learn that yet thy father lives, 355  
And will return, have patience yet a year,  
However hard it seem. But shouldst thou find  
That he is now no more, return forthwith  
To thy own native land, and pile on high  
His monument, and let the funeral rites 360  
Be sumptuously performed as may become  
The dead, and let thy mother wed again.  
And when all this is fully brought to pass,

Take counsel with thy spirit and thy heart  
How to destroy the suitor crew that haunt 365  
Thy palace, whether by a secret snare  
Or open force. No longer shouldst thou act  
As if thou wert a boy ; thou hast outgrown  
The age of childish sports. Hast thou not heard  
What honor the divine Orestes gained 370  
With all men, when he slew the murderer,  
The crafty wretch Ægisthus, by whose hand  
The illustrious father of Orestes died ?  
And then, my friend, — for I perceive that thou  
Art of a manly and a stately growth, — 375  
Be also bold, that men hereafter born  
May give thee praise. And now must I depart  
To my good ship, and to my friends who wait,  
Too anxiously perhaps, for my return.  
Act wisely now, and bear my words in mind.” 380

The prudent youth Telemachus rejoined : —  
“ Well hast thou spoken, and with kind intent,  
O stranger ! like a father to a son ;  
And ne’er shall I forget what thou hast said.  
Yet stay, I pray thee, though in haste, and bathe 385  
And be refreshed, and take to thy good ship  
Some gift with thee, such as may please thee well,  
Precious and rare, which thou mayst ever keep  
In memory of me, — a gift like those  
Which friendly hosts bestow upon their guests.” 390

Then spake the blue-eyed Pallas : “ Stay me not,  
For now would I depart. Whatever gift

Thy heart may prompt thee to bestow, reserve  
Till I come back, that I may bear it home, 394  
And thou shalt take some precious thing in turn."

So spake the blue-eyed Pallas, and withdrew,  
Ascending like a bird. She filled his heart  
With strength and courage, waking vividly  
His father's memory. Then the noble youth  
Went forth among the suitors. Silent all 400  
They sat and listened to the illustrious bard,  
Who sang of the calamitous return  
Of the Greek host from Troy, at the command  
Of Pallas. From her chamber o'er the hall  
The daughter of Icarius, the sage queen 405  
Penelope, had heard the heavenly strain,  
And knew its theme. Down by the lofty stairs  
She came, but not alone ; there followed her  
Two maidens. When the glorious lady reached  
The threshold of the strong-built hall, where sat 410  
The suitors, holding up a delicate veil  
Before her face, and with a gush of tears,  
The queen bespake the sacred minstrel thus :—

"Phemius ! thou knowest many a pleasing  
theme, —  
The deeds of gods and heroes, such as bards 415  
Are wont to celebrate. Take then thy place  
And sing of one of these, and let the guests  
In silence drink the wine ; but cease this strain ;  
It is too sad ; it cuts me to the heart, 419  
And wakes a sorrow without bounds, — such grief

I bear for him, my lord, of whom I think  
Continually ; whose glory is abroad  
Through Hellas and through Argos, everywhere."

And then Telemachus, the prudent, spake : —  
" Why, O my mother ! canst thou not endure <sup>425</sup>  
That thus the well-graced poet should delight  
His hearers with a theme to which his mind  
Is inly moved ? The bards deserve no blame ;  
Jove is the cause, for he at will inspires <sup>429</sup>  
The lay that each must sing. Reprove not, then,  
The minstrel who relates the unhappy fate  
Of the Greek warriors. All men most applaud  
The song that has the newest theme ; and thou —  
Strengthen thy heart to hear it. Keep in mind  
That not alone Ulysses is cut off <sup>435</sup>  
From his return, but that with him at Troy  
Have many others perished. Now withdraw  
Into thy chamber ; ply thy household tasks,  
The loom, the spindle ; bid thy maidens speed  
Their work. To say what words beseem a feast <sup>440</sup>  
Belongs to man, and most to me ; for here  
Within these walls the authority is mine."

The matron, wondering at his words, withdrew  
To her own place, but in her heart laid up <sup>444</sup>  
Her son's wise sayings. When she now had reached,  
With her attendant maids, the upper rooms,  
She mourned Ulysses, her beloved spouse,  
And wept, till blue-eyed Pallas closed her lids  
In gentle slumbers. Noisily, meanwhile,



The suitors revelled in the shadowy halls ; 450  
And thus Telemachus, the prudent, spake : —

“ Ye suitors of my mother, insolent  
And overbearing ; cheerful be our feast,  
Not riotous. It would become us well  
To listen to the lay of such a bard, 455  
So like the gods in voice. I bid you all  
Meet in full council with the morrow morn,  
That I may give you warning to depart  
From out my palace, and to seek your feasts  
Elsewhere at your own charge, — haply to hold 460  
Your daily banquets at each other’s homes.  
But if it seem to you the better way  
To plunder one man’s goods, go on to waste  
My substance ; I will call the immortal gods  
To aid me, and if Jupiter allow 465  
Fit retribution for your deeds, ye die,  
Within this very palace, unavenged.”

He spake ; the suitors bit their close-pressed lips,  
Astonished at the youth’s courageous words.  
And thus Antinoös, Eupeithes’ son, 470  
Made answer : “ Most assuredly the gods,  
Telemachus, have taught thee how to frame  
Grand sentences and gallantly harangue.  
Ne’er may the son of Saturn make thee king  
Over the sea-girt Ithaca, whose isle 475  
Is thy inheritance by claim of birth.”

Telemachus, the prudent, thus rejoined : —  
“ Wilt thou be angry at the word I speak,

Antinoüs ? I would willingly accept  
The kingly station if conferred by Jove. 480  
Dost thou indeed regard it as the worst  
Of all conditions of mankind ? Not so  
For him who reigns ; his house grows opulent,  
And he the more is honored. Many kings  
Within the bounds of sea-girt Ithaca 485  
There are, both young and old, let any one  
Bear rule, since great Ulysses is no more ;  
But I will be the lord of mine own house,  
And o'er my servants whom the godlike chief,  
Ulysses, brought from war, his share of spoil." 490

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,  
Addressed the youth in turn : " Assuredly,  
What man hereafter, of the Achaian race,  
Shall bear the rule o'er sea-girt Ithaca 494  
Rests with the gods. But thou shalt keep thy wealth,  
And may no son of violence come to make  
A spoil of thy possessions while men dwell  
In Ithaca. And now, my friend, I ask  
Who was thy guest ; whence came he, of what land  
Claims he to be, where do his kindred dwell 500  
And where his patrimonial acres lie ?  
With tidings of thy father's near return  
Came he, or to receive a debt ? How swift  
Was his departure, waiting not for us  
To know him ! yet in aspect and in air 505  
He seemed to be no man of vulgar note."

Telemachus, the prudent, answered thus :—

“ My father’s coming, O Eurymachus,  
 Is to be hoped no more ; nor can I trust  
 Tidings from whatsoever part they come, 510  
 Nor pay regard to oracles, although  
 My mother send to bring a soothsayer  
 Within the palace, and inquire of him.  
 But this man was my father’s guest ; he comes  
 From Taphos ; Mentès is his name, a son 515  
 Of the brave chief Anchialus ; he reigns  
 Over the Taphians, men who love the sea.”

He spake, but in his secret heart he knew  
 The immortal goddess. Then the suitors turned,  
 Delighted, to the dance and cheerful song, 520  
 And waited for the evening. On their sports  
 The evening with its shadowy blackness came ;  
 Then each to his own home withdrew to sleep,  
 While to his lofty chamber, in full view,  
 Built high in that magnificent palace home, 525  
 Telemachus went up, and sought his couch,  
 Intent on many thoughts. The chaste and sage  
 Dame Eurycleia by his side went up  
 With lighted torches, — she a child of Ops,  
 Pisenor’s son. Her, in her early bloom, 530  
 Laertes purchased for a hundred beeves,  
 And in his palace honored equally  
 With his chaste wife ; yet never sought her bed.  
 He would not wrong his queen. ’T was she who  
 bore

The torches with Telemachus. She loved 535

Her young lord more than all the other maids,  
And she had nursed him in his tender years.  
He opened now the chamber door and sat  
Upon the couch, put his soft tunic off  
And placed it in the prudent matron's hands. 540  
She folded it and smoothed it, hung it near  
To that fair bed, and, going quickly forth,  
Pulled at the silver ring to close the door,  
And drew the thong that moved the fastening bolt.  
He, lapped in the soft fleeces, all night long, 545  
Thought of the voyage Pallas had ordained.

## BOOK II.

NOW when the Morning, child of Dawn, ap-  
peared,  
The dear son of Ulysses left his bed  
And put his garments on. His trenchant sword  
He hung upon his shoulders, and made fast  
His shapely sandals to his shining feet, 5  
And issued from his chamber like a god.  
At once he bade the clear-voiced heralds call  
The long-haired Greeks to council. They obeyed ;  
Quickly the chiefs assembled, and when all  
Were at the appointed place, Telemachus 10  
Went to the council, bearing in his hand  
A brazen spear, yet went he not alone.

Two swift dogs followed him, while Pallas shed  
A heavenly beauty over him, and all  
Admired him as he came. He took the seat 15  
Of his great father, and the aged men  
Made way for him. And then Ægyptius spake, —  
A hero bowed with age, who much had seen  
And known. His son, the warlike Antiphus,  
Went with the great Ulysses in his fleet 20  
To courser-breeding Troy, and afterward  
The cruel Cyclops, in the vaulted cave,  
Slew him for his last meal. Three other sons  
There were, and one of these, Eurynomus,  
Was of the suitor train ; the others took 25  
Charge of their father's acres. Never yet  
Had he forgotten his lost son or ceased  
To grieve for him, and as he spoke he wept.

“Hear, men of Ithaca, what I shall say.  
No council, no assembly, have we held 30  
Since great Ulysses in his roomy ships  
Departed from our isle. Who now is he  
That summons us? On which of our young men  
Or elders presses this necessity?  
Is it belike that one of you has heard 35  
Of an approaching foe, and can declare  
The tidings clearly? Or would he propose  
And urge some other matter which concerns  
The public weal? A just and generous mind  
I deem is his, and 't is my hope that Jove 40  
Will bring to pass the good at which he aims.”

As thus he spake Ulysses' son rejoiced  
In his auspicious words, nor longer kept  
His seat, but, yielding to an inward force,  
Rose midst them all to speak, while in his hand 45  
Pisenor, the sagacious counsellor  
And herald, placed the sceptre. Then he turned  
To the old man, Ægyptius, speaking thus:—

“O aged man, not far from thee is he  
Who called this council, as thou soon shalt know. 50  
Mine chiefly is the trouble ; I have brought  
No news of an approaching foe, which I  
Was first to hear, and would declare to all,  
Nor urge I other matters which concern  
The public weal ; my own necessity — 55  
The evil that has fallen on my house —  
Constrains me ; it is twofold. First, that I  
Have lost an excellent father, who was king  
Among you, and ruled o'er you with a sway  
As gentle as a father's. Greater yet 60  
Is the next evil, and will soon o'erthrow  
My house and waste my substance utterly.  
Suitors, the sons of those who, in our isle,  
Hold the chief rank, importunately press  
Round my unwilling mother. They disdain 65  
To ask her of Icarius, that the king  
Her father may endow her, and bestow  
His daughter on the man who best may gain  
His favor, but with every day they come  
Into our palace, sacrificing here 70

Oxen and sheep and fatling goats, and hold  
High festival, and drink the purple wine  
Unstinted, with unbounded waste ; for here  
Is no man like Ulysses to repel  
The mischief from my house. Not such are we 75  
As he was, to resist the wrong. We pass  
For weaklings, immature in valor, yet  
If I had but the power, assuredly  
I would resist, for by these men are done  
Insufferable things, nor does my house 80  
Perish with honor. Ye yourselves should feel  
Shame at these doings ; ye should dread reproach  
From those who dwell around us, and should fear  
The offended gods, lest they repay these crimes  
With vengeance. I beseech you, O my friends, 85  
Both by Olympian Jove, and her by whom  
Councils of men are summoned and dissolved, —  
The goddess Themis, — that ye all refrain,  
And leave me to my grief alone, unless  
Ulysses, my great father, may have done 90  
Wrong in his anger to the gallant Greeks,  
Which ye, by prompting men to acts like these,  
Seek to avenge on me. Far better 't were,  
Should ye yourselves destroy our goods and slay  
Our herds, since, were it so, there might in time 95  
Be some requital. We, from street to street,  
Would plead continually for recompense,  
Till all should be restored. But now ye heap  
Upon me wrongs for which is no redress."

Thus angrily he spake, and dashed to earth 100  
The sceptre, shedding tears. The people felt  
Compassion ; all were silent for a space,  
And there was none who dared with railing words  
Answer Telemachus, save one alone,  
Antinoüs, who arose and thus replied : — 105

“ Telemachus, thou youth of braggart speech  
And boundless in abuse, what hast thou said  
To our dishonor ? Thou wouldst fix on us  
A brand of shame. The blame is not with us,  
The Achaian suitors ; 't is thy mother's fault, 110  
Skilled as she is in crafty shifts. 'T is now  
Already the third year, and soon will be  
The fourth, since she began to cozen us.  
She gives us all to hope, and sends fair words  
To each by message, yet in her own mind 115  
Has other purposes. This shrewd device  
She planned ; she laid upon the loom a web,  
Delicate, wide, and vast in length, and said  
Thus to us all : ‘ Young princes, who are come  
To woo me, since Ulysses is no more, — 120  
My noble husband, — urge me not, I pray,  
To marriage, till I finish in the loom —  
That so my threads may not be spun in vain —  
A funeral vesture for the hero-chief  
Laertes, when his fatal hour shall come 125  
With death's long sleep. Else some Achaian dame  
Might blame me, should I leave without a shroud  
Him who in life possessed such ample wealth !’



Such were her words, and easily they wrought  
Upon our generous minds. So went she on, 130  
Weaving that ample web, and every night  
Unravell'd it by torchlight. Three full years  
She practised thus, and by the fraud deceived  
The Grecian youths; but when the hours had brought  
The fourth year round, a woman who knew all 135  
Revealed the mystery, and we ourselves  
Saw her unravelling the ample web.  
Thenceforth, constrained, and with unwilling hands,  
She finished it. Now let the suitors make  
Their answer to thy words, that thou mayst know 140  
Our purpose fully, and the Achaïans all  
May know it likewise. Send thy mother hence,  
Requiring that she wed the suitor whom  
Her father chooses and herself prefers.  
But if she still go on to treat the sons 145  
Of Greece with such despite, too confident  
In gifts which Pallas has bestowed on her  
So richly, noble arts, and faculties  
Of mind, and crafty shifts, beyond all those  
Of whom we ever heard that lived of yore, 150  
The bright-haired ladies of the Achaïan race,  
Tyro, Alcmena, and Mycenè, famed  
For glossy tresses, none of them endowed  
As is Penelope, though this last shift  
Be ill devised, — so long will we consume 155  
Thy substance and estate as she shall hold  
Her present mood, the purpose which the gods

Have planted in her breast. She to herself  
Gains great renown, but surely brings on thee  
Loss of much goods. And now we go not hence 160  
To our affairs nor elsewhere, till she wed  
Whichever of the Greeks may please her most."

And then rejoined discreet Telemachus:—  
"Antinoüs, grievous wrong it were to send  
Unwilling from this palace her who bore 165  
And nursed me. Whether he be living yet  
Or dead, my father is in distant lands ;  
And should I, of my own accord and will,  
Dismiss my mother, I must make perforce  
Icarius large amends, and that were hard. 170  
And he would do me mischief, and the gods  
Would send yet other evils on my head.  
For then my mother, going forth, would call  
On the grim Furies, and the general curse  
Of all men would be on me. Think not I 175  
Will ever speak that word. But if ye bear  
A sense of injury for what is past,  
Go from these halls ; provide for other feasts,  
Consuming what is yours, and visiting  
Each other's homes in turn. But if it seem 180  
To you the wiser and the better way  
To plunder one man's goods, go on to waste  
My substance. I shall call the eternal gods  
To aid me, and, if Jupiter allow  
Fit retribution for your crimes, ye die 185  
Within this very palace unavenged."

So spake Telemachus. The Thunderer, Jove,  
Sent flying from a lofty mountain-top  
Two eagles. First they floated on the wind  
Close to each other, and with wings outspread ; 190  
But as they came to where the murmuring crowd  
Was gathered just beneath their flight, they turned  
And clapped their heavy pinions, looking down  
With deadly omen on the heads below,  
And with their talons tore each other's cheeks 195  
And necks, and then they darted to the right  
Away through Ithaca among its roofs.  
All who beheld the eagles were amazed,  
And wondered what event was near at hand.  
Among the rest an aged hero spake, 200  
Named Halitherses, Mastor's son. He knew,  
More truly than the others of his age,  
To augur from the flight of birds, and read  
The will of fate, — and wisely thus he spake : —  
“ Hear, men of Ithaca, what I shall say. 205  
I speak of what most narrowly concerns  
The suitors, over whom already hangs  
Great peril, for Ulysses will not be  
Long at a distance from his home and friends.  
Even now he is not far, and meditates 210  
Slaughter and death to all the suitor train ;  
And evil will ensue to many more  
Of us, who dwell in sunny Ithaca.  
Now let us think what measures may restrain  
These men, — or let them of their own accord 215

Desist, — the soonest were for them the best.  
For not as one untaught do I foretell  
Events to come, but speak of what I know.  
All things that I predicted to our chief,  
What time the Argive troops embarked for Troy, <sup>220</sup>  
And sage Ulysses with them, are fulfilled ;  
I said that after many hardships borne,  
And all his comrades lost, the twentieth year  
Would bring him back, a stranger to us all, —  
And all that then I spake of comes to pass.” <sup>225</sup>

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,  
Answered the seer : “Go to thy house, old man,  
And to thy boys, and prophesy to them,  
Lest evil come upon them. I can act,  
In matters such as these, a prophet’s part <sup>230</sup>  
Better than thou. True, there are many birds  
That fly about in sunshine, but not all  
Are ominous. Ulysses far away  
Has perished ; well it would have been if thou  
Hadst perished with him ; then thou wouldst not  
prate <sup>235</sup>

Idly of things to come, nor wouldst thou stir  
Telemachus to anger, in the hope  
Of bearing to thy house some gift from him.  
Now let me say, and be assured my words  
Will be fulfilled : experienced as thou art, <sup>240</sup>  
If thou by treacherous speeches shalt inflame  
A younger man than thou to violent deeds,  
The sharper punishment shall first be his,

But we will lay on thee a penalty,  
Old man, which thou shalt find it hard to bear, 245  
And bitterly wilt thou repent. And now  
Let me persuade Telemachus to send  
His mother to her father. They will make  
A marriage for her there, and give with her  
A liberal dowry, such as may become 250  
A favorite daughter on her wedding-day,  
Else never will the sons of Greece renounce,  
I think, the difficult suit. We do not fear  
Telemachus himself, though glib of speech,  
Nor care we for the empty oracle 255  
Which thou, old man, dost utter, making thee  
Only more hated. Still will his estate  
Be wasted, nor will order e'er return  
While she defers her marriage with some prince  
Of the Achaïans. We shall urge our suit 260  
For that most excellent of womankind  
As rivals, nor withdraw to seek the hand  
Of others, whom we fitly might espouse."

To this discreet Telemachus replied : —  
"Eurymachus, and ye, the illustrious train 265  
Of suitors, I have nothing more to ask, —  
No more to say, — for now the gods and all  
The Achaïans know the truth. But let me have  
A gallant bark, and twenty men to make  
From coast to coast a voyage, visiting 270  
Sparta and sandy Pylos, to inquire  
For my long-absent father, and the chance

Of his return, if any of mankind  
Can tell me aught, or if some rumor come  
From Jove, since thus are tidings often brought 275  
To human knowledge. Should I learn that yet  
He lives and may return, I then would wait  
A twelvemonth, though impatient. Should I hear  
That he no longer lives, I shall return  
Homeward, and pile his monument on high 280  
With funeral honors that become the dead,  
And give my mother to a second spouse."

He spake and took his seat, and then arose  
Mentor, once comrade of the excellent chief  
Ulysses, who, departing with his fleet, 285  
Consigned his household to the aged man,  
That they should all obey him, and that he  
Should safely keep his charge. He rose amid  
The assembly, and addressed them wisely thus : —

"Hear and attend, ye men of Ithaca, 290  
To what I say. Let never sceptred king  
Henceforth be gracious, mild, and merciful,  
And righteous ; rather be he deaf to prayer  
And prone to deeds of wrong, since no one now  
Remembers the divine Ulysses more, 295  
Among the people over whom he ruled  
Benignly like a father. Yet I bear  
No envy to the haughty suitors here,  
Moved as they are to deeds of violence  
By evil counsels, since, in pillaging 300  
The substance of Ulysses, who they say

Will nevermore return, they risk their lives.  
But I am angry with the rest, with all  
Of you who sit here mute, nor even with words  
Of stern reproof restrain their violence, 305  
Though ye so many are and they so few."

Leiocritus, Evenor's son, rejoined : —

"Malicious Mentor, foolish man ! what talk  
Is this of holding us in check ? 'T were hard  
For numbers even greater than our own 310  
To drive us from a feast. And should the prince  
Of Ithaca, Ulysses, come himself,  
Thinking to thrust the illustrious suitors forth  
That banquet in these palace halls, his queen  
Would have no cause for joy at his return, 315  
Greatly as she desired it. He would draw  
Sure death upon himself in strife with us  
Who are so many. Thou hast spoken ill.  
Now let the people who are gathered here  
Disperse to their employments. We will leave 320  
Mentor and Halitherses, who were both  
His father's early comrades, to provide  
For the youth's voyage. He will yet remain  
A long time here, I think, to ask for news  
In Ithaca, and never will set sail." 325

Thus having said, he instantly dismissed  
The people ; they departed to their homes ;  
The suitors sought the palace of the prince.

Then to the ocean-side, apart from all,  
Went forth Telemachus, and washed his hands 330

In the gray surf, and prayed to Pallas thus :—

“Hear me, thou deity who yesterday,  
In visiting our palace, didst command  
That I should traverse the black deep to learn  
News of my absent father, and the chance 335  
Of his return ! The Greeks themselves withstand,  
My purpose ; the proud suitors most of all.”

Such was his prayer, and straightway Pallas stood,  
In form and voice like Mentor, by his side,  
And thus accosted him with winged words :— 340

“Telemachus, thou henceforth shalt not lack  
Valor or wisdom. If with thee abides  
Thy father’s gallant spirit, as he was  
In deed and word, thou wilt not vainly make  
This voyage. But if thou be not in truth 345  
The son of him and of Penelope,  
Then I rely not on thee to perform  
What thou dost meditate. Few sons are like  
Their fathers : most are worse, a very few  
Excel their parents. Since thou wilt not lack 350  
Valor and wisdom in the coming time,  
Nor is thy father’s shrewdness wanting quite  
In thee, great hope there is that happily  
This plan will be fulfilled. Regard not then  
The suitor train, their purposes and plots. 355  
Senseless are they, as little wise as just,  
And have no thought of the black doom of death  
Now drawing near to sweep them in a day  
To their destruction. But thy enterprise



Must suffer no delay. So much am I 360  
 Thy father's friend and thine, that I will cause  
 A swift bark to be fitted out for sea,  
 And will myself attend thee. Go now hence  
 Among the suitors, and make ready there  
 The needful stores, and let them all be put 365  
 In vessels, — wine in jars, and meal, the strength  
 Of man, in close thick skins, — while I engage,  
 Among the people here, a willing crew.  
 Ships are there in our sea-girt Ithaca  
 Full many, new and old, and I will choose 370  
 The best of these, and see it well equipped.  
 Then will we drag it down to the broad sea."

Thus Pallas spake, the child of Jupiter.  
 Telemachus obeyed the heavenly voice,  
 And stayed not ; home he hastened, where he saw 375  
 Sadly the arrogant suitors in the hall,  
 Busily flaying goats and roasting swine.  
 Antinoüs, laughing, came to meet the youth,  
 And fastened on his hand, and thus he spake : —

"Telemachus, thou youth of lofty speech 380  
 And boundless in abuse, let neither word  
 Nor deed that may displease thee vex thy heart,  
 But gayly eat and drink as thou wert wont.  
 The Achaians generously will provide  
 Whatever thou requirest, ship and men, — 385  
 All chosen rowers, — that thou mayst arrive  
 Sooner at sacred Pylos, there to learn  
 Tidings of thy illustrious father's fate."

Then spake discreet Telemachus in turn : —  
“ Antinoüs, never could I sit with you, 390  
Arrogant ones ! in silence nor enjoy  
The feast in quiet. Is it not enough,  
O suitors, that while I was yet a child  
Ye wasted on your revelries my large  
And rich possessions ? Now that I am grown, 395  
And, when I hear the words of other men,  
Discern their meaning, now that every day  
Strengthens my spirit, I will make the attempt  
To bring the evil fates upon your heads,  
Whether I go to Pylos or remain 400  
Among this people. I shall surely make  
This voyage, and it will not be in vain.  
Although I go a passenger on board  
Another’s ship, — since neither ship have I  
Nor rowers, — ye have judged that so were best.” 405

He spake, and quickly from the suitor’s hand  
Withdrew his own. The others who prepared  
Their banquet in the palace scoffed at him,  
And flung at him their bitter taunts, and one  
Among the insolent youths reviled him thus : — 410

“ Telemachus is certainly resolved  
To butcher us. He goes to bring allies  
From sandy Pylos or the Spartan coast,  
He is so bent on slaughter. Or perhaps  
He visits the rich land of Ephyre 415  
In search of deadly poisons to be thrown  
Into a cup and end us all at once.”

Then said another of the haughty youths : —  
“ Who knows but, wandering in his hollow bark,  
He too may perish, far from all his friends, 420  
Just as Ulysses perished? This would bring  
Increase of labor ; it would cast on us  
The trouble to divide his goods, and give  
His palace to his mother, and to him  
Who takes the woman as his wedded wife.” 425

So spake they, but Telemachus went down  
To that high-vaulted room, his father's, where  
Lay heaps of gold and brass, and garments store  
In chests, and fragrant oils. And there stood casks  
Of delicate old wine and pure, a drink 430  
For gods, in rows against the wall, to wait  
If ever, after many hardships borne,  
Ulysses should return. Upon that room  
Close-fitting double doors were shut, and there  
Was one who night and day kept diligent watch, 435  
A woman, Eurycleia, child of Ops,  
Peisenor's son. Telemachus went in  
And called her to him, and bespake her thus : —

“ Nurse, let sweet wine be drawn into my jars,  
The finest next to that which thou dost keep 440  
Expecting our unhappy lord, if yet  
The nobly born Ulysses shall escape  
The doom of death and come to us again.  
Fill twelve, and fit the covers close, and pour  
Meal into well-sewn skins, and let the tale 445  
Be twenty measures of the flour of wheat.

This none but thou must know. Let all these things  
Be brought together ; then, as night shuts in,  
When to her upper chamber, seeking rest,  
My mother shall withdraw, I come and take 430  
What thou providest for me. I am bound  
For Sparta and for Pylos in the sands,  
To gather news concerning the return  
Of my dear father, if I haply may."

So spake the youth, and his beloved nurse 435  
Sobbed, wept aloud, and spake these winged  
words : —

"Why should there come, dear child, a thought  
like this  
Into thy heart. Why wouldst thou wander forth  
To distant regions, — thou an only son  
And dearly loved? Ulysses, nobly born, 460  
Has perished, from his native land afar,  
'Mid a strange race. These men, when thou art gone,  
At once will lay their plots to take thy life,  
And share thy wealth among them. Stay thou here  
Among thy people ; need is none that thou 465  
Shouldst suffer, roaming o'er the barren deep."

Then spake discreet Telemachus again : —  
"Be of good cheer, O nurse, for my design  
Is not without the sanction of a god ;  
But swear thou not to let my mother know 470  
Of my intent until the eleventh day  
Or twelfth shall pass, or till, in missing me,  
She learn of my departure, lest she weep

And stain with tears the beauty of her face."

He spake ; the ancient woman solemnly 475  
Swore by the gods, and when the rite was o'er  
Drew wine into the jars, and poured the meal  
Into the well-sewn skins. Telemachus  
Entered the hall and joined the suitor train. 479

Then did the blue-eyed goddess turn her thoughts  
To other plans, and taking on herself  
The semblance of Telemachus, she ranged  
The city, speaking to each man in turn,  
And bidding him at nightfall to repair  
To where the good ship lay. That gallant ship 485  
She begged of the renowned Noëmon, son  
Of Phronius, who with cheerful grace complied.

The sun went down, the city streets lay all  
In shadow. Then she drew the good ship down  
Into the sea, and brought and put on board 490  
The appointments every well-built galley needs,  
And moored her at the bottom of the port,  
Where, in a throng, obedient to the word  
Of Pallas, round her came her gallant crew.

With yet a new device the blue-eyed maid 495  
Went to the palace of the godlike chief  
Ulysses, where she poured a gentle sleep  
Over the suitors. As they drank she made  
Their senses wander, and their hands let fall  
The goblets. Now no longer at the board 500  
They sat, but sallied forth, and through the town  
Went to their slumbers, for the power of sleep

Had fallen heavily upon their lids.

Then blue-eyed Pallas from those sumptuous halls  
Summoned Telemachus. She took the form 505  
And voice of Mentor, and bespake him thus :—

“Telemachus, already at their oars  
Sit thy well-armed companions and await  
Thy coming ; let us go without delay.”

Thus having spoken, Pallas led the way 510  
With rapid footsteps which he followed fast ;  
Till having reached the galley and the sea  
They found their long-haired comrades at the beach,  
And thus the gallant prince Telemachus  
Bespake them : “Hither, comrades, let us bring 515  
The sea-stores from the dwelling where they lie ;  
My mother knows not of it, nor her maids ;  
The secret has been told to one alone.”

He spake, and went before them. In his steps  
They followed. To the gallant bark they brought 520  
The stores, and, as the well-beloved son  
Of King Ulysses bade, they laid them down  
Within the hull. Telemachus went up  
The vessel's side, but Pallas first embarked,  
And at the stern sat down, while next to her 525  
Telemachus was seated. Then the crew  
Cast loose the fastenings and went all on board,  
And took their places on the rowers' seats,  
While blue-eyed Pallas sent a favoring breeze,  
A fresh wind from the west, that murmuring swept 530  
The dark-blue main. Telemachus gave forth

The word to wield the tackle ; they obeyed,  
 And raised the fir-tree mast, and, fitting it  
 Into its socket, bound it fast with cords,  
 And drew and spread with firmly twisted ropes 535  
 The shining sails on high. The steady wind  
 Swelled out the canvas in the midst ; the ship  
 Moved on, the dark sea roaring round her keel,  
 As swiftly through the waves she cleft her way.  
 And when the rigging of that swift black ship 540  
 Was firmly in its place, they filled their cups  
 With wine, and to the ever-living gods  
 Poured out libations, most of all to one,  
 Jove's blue-eyed daughter. Thus through all that  
 night  
 And all the ensuing morn they held their way. 545

## BOOK III.

NOW from the fair broad bosom of the sea  
 Into the brazen vault of heaven the sun  
 Rose shining for the immortals and for men  
 Upon the foodful earth. The voyagers  
 Arrived at Pylos, nobly built, the town 5  
 Of Neleus. There, upon the ocean-side,  
 They found the people offering coal-black steers  
 To dark-haired Neptune. On nine seats they sat,  
 Five hundred on each seat ; nine steers were slain

For each five hundred there. While they performed  
The rite, and, tasting first the entrails, burned      11  
The thighs to ocean's god, the Ithacans  
Touched land, and, lifting up the good ship's sail,  
Furled it and moored the keel, and then stepped out  
Upon the shore. Forth from the galley came      15  
Telemachus, the goddess guiding him,  
And thus to him the blue-eyed Pallas said : —

“ Telemachus, there now is no excuse,  
Not even the least, for shamefaced backwardness.  
Thou hast come hither o'er the deep to ask      20  
For tidings of thy father, — what far land  
Conceals him, what the fate that he has met.  
Go then at once to Nestor, the renowned  
In horsemanship, and we shall see what plan  
He hath in mind for thee. Entreat him there      25  
That frankly he declare it. He will speak  
No word of falsehood ; he is truly wise.”

And thus discreet Telemachus replied : —  
“ O Mentor, how shall I approach the chief,  
And with what salutation ? Little skill      30  
Have I in courtly phrase, and shame becomes  
A youth in questioning an aged man.”

Pallas, the blue-eyed goddess, spake again : —  
“ In part thy mind will prompt thy speech ; in part  
A god will put the words into thy mouth, —      35  
For well I deem that thou wert neither born  
Nor trained without the favor of the gods.”

Thus having said, the blue-eyed Pallas moved



With hasty pace before, and in her steps  
He followed close, until they reached the seats 40  
Of those assembled Pyliaus. Nestor there  
Sat with his sons, while his companions stood  
Around him and prepared the feast, and some  
Roasted the flesh at fires, and some transfixed  
The parts with spits. As they beheld the approach 45  
Of strangers they advanced, and took their hands,  
And bade them sit. Pisistratus, a son  
Of Nestor, came the first of all, and took  
A hand of each, and placed them at the feast  
On the soft hides that o'er the ocean sand 50  
Were spread beside his brother Thrasymed,  
And his own father ; brought for their repast  
Parts of the entrails, poured for them the wine  
Into a golden goblet, held it forth  
In his right hand, and with these words bespake 55  
Pallas, the child of ægis-bearing Jove : —

“ Pray, stranger, to King Neptune. Ye have  
chanced

Upon his feast in coming to our coast.  
And after thy libation poured, and prayer  
Made to the god, give over to thy friend 60  
The goblet of choice wine that he may make  
Libation also ; he, I question not,  
Prays to the gods ; we all have need of them.  
A younger man is he than thou, and seems  
In age to be my equal ; therefore I 65  
Will give the golden goblet first to thee.”

He spake, and in the hands of Pallas placed  
The goblet of choice wine. Well pleased was she  
With one so just and so discreet, — well pleased  
That first to her he reached the cup of gold, 70  
And thus she prayed to Neptune fervently : —

“Hear, Neptune, thou who dost embrace the  
earth,  
And of thy grace disdain not to bestow  
These blessings on thy suppliants. First of all  
Vouchsafe to Nestor and his sons increase 75  
Of glory ; on the Pylia people next  
Bestow, for this most sumptuous hecatomb,  
Large recompense ; and, lastly, grant to us —  
Telemachus and me — a safe return  
To our own country with the end attained 80  
Which brought us hither in our gallant bark.”

Thus did she pray, while she fulfilled the prayer ;  
And then she handed to Telemachus  
The fair round goblet, and in words like hers  
The dear son of Ulysses prayed. Meanwhile 85  
The Pylians, having roasted well the flesh  
And drawn it from the spits, distributing  
To each his portion, held high festival.  
And when the calls of hunger and of thirst  
Were silenced, Nestor, the Gerenian knight, 90  
Began discourse, and thus bespake his guests : —

“The fitting time is come to ask our guests  
Who they may be, since now their feast is o’er.  
Say then, O strangers, who ye are, and whence

Ye come along the pathway of the deep. 95  
Have ye an errand here, or do ye roam  
The seas at large, like pirates, braving death,  
And visiting with ravage foreign states ? ”

And then discreet Telemachus replied  
Boldly, — for Pallas strengthened in that hour 100  
His heart that he might confidently ask  
News of his absent father, and so win  
A worthy fame among the sons of men : —

“ O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece !  
Thou bid’st us tell thee whence we came, and I 105  
Will faithfully declare it. We are come  
From Ithaca, beneath the Neritus,  
And private, and not general, is the cause  
Of which I am to speak. I came to ask  
Concerning my great father, the large souled 110  
And nobly-born Ulysses, who ’t is said  
With thee, his friend in arms, laid waste the town  
Of Ilium. We have heard where all the rest  
Who warred against the Trojans were cut off,  
And died sad deaths ; his fate alone the son 115  
Of Saturn hath not chosen to reveal, —  
Whether he fell on land by hostile hands,  
Or while at sea was whelmed beneath the waves  
Of Amphitritè. Wherefore to thy knees  
I come, to ask that thou — if so thou wilt — 120  
Relate the manner of his mournful death,  
As thou didst see it with thine eyes, or else  
As thou from other wanderers hast heard

Its history ; for she who brought him forth  
Bore him to be unhappy. Think thou not 125  
To soften aught, through tenderness to me,  
In thy recital, but in faithful words  
Tell me the whole, whatever thou hast seen.  
And I conjure thee, that if, in his life,  
My father, great Ulysses, ever gave 130  
Promise of word or deed for thee, and kept  
His promise, in the realm of Troy, where ye  
Achaïans bore such hardships, that thou now  
Remember it and speak without disguise."

And Nestor the Gerenian knight replied : — 135  
" My friend, since thou recallest to my mind  
The sufferings borne by us the sons of Greece,  
Although of peerless valor, in that land,  
Both when we ranged in ships the darkling sea  
For booty wheresoe'er Achilles led, 140  
And when around King Priam's populous town  
We fought, where fell our bravest, know thou then  
That there the valiant Ajax lies, and there  
Achilles ; there Patroclus, like the gods  
In council ; there my well-beloved son 145  
Blameless and brave, Antilochus the swift  
Of foot and warlike, — many woes beside  
We bore, and who of mortal birth could give  
Their history? Nay, though thou shouldst remain  
Five years or six, and ask of all the griefs 150  
Endured by the brave Greeks, thou wouldst depart  
Outwearied to thy home, ere thou hadst heard

The whole. Nine years in harassing the foe  
We passed, beleaguering them and planning wiles  
Innumerable. Saturn's son at last 155  
With difficulty seemed to close the war.  
Then was there none who might presume to vie  
In wisdom with Ulysses ; that great man  
Excelled in every kind of stratagem, —  
Thy father, — if indeed thou be his son. 160  
I look on thee amazed ; all thy discourse  
Is just like his, and one would ne'er believe  
A younger man could speak so much like him.  
While we were there, Ulysses and myself  
In council or assembly never spake 165  
On different sides, but with a like intent  
We thoughtfully consulted how to guide  
The Achaïans in the way we deemed the best ;  
But after we had overthrown and spoiled  
King Priam's lofty city, and set sail 170  
For home, and by some heavenly power the Greeks  
Were scattered, Jupiter ordained for them  
A sad return. For all were neither wise  
Nor just, and many drew upon themselves  
An evil doom, — the fatal wrath of her, 175  
The blue-eyed maid, who claims her birth from Jove.  
'T was she who kindled strife between the sons  
Of Atreus. They had called the Achaïans all  
To an assembly, not with due regard  
To order, at the setting of the sun, 180  
And thither came the warriors overpowered

With wine. The brother kings set forth the cause  
Of that assembly. Menelaus first  
Bade all the Greeks prepare for their return  
O'er the great deep. That counsel little pleased <sup>185</sup>  
King Agamemnon, who desired to keep  
The people longer there, that he might soothe  
By sacred hecatombs the fiery wrath  
Of Pallas. Fool! who could not see how vain  
Were such persuasion, for the eternal gods <sup>190</sup>  
Are not soon won to change their purposes.  
They stood disputing thus, with bitter words,  
Till wrangling noisily on different sides  
Rose up the well-armed Greeks. The ensuing night  
We rested, but we cherished in our breasts <sup>195</sup>  
A mutual hate ; so for our punishment  
Had Jove ordained. With early morn we drew  
Our ships to the great deep, and put our goods  
And our deep-bosomed women all on board.  
Yet half the host went not, but on the shore <sup>200</sup>  
Remained with Agamemnon, Atreus' son,  
And shepherd of the people. All the rest  
Embarked, weighed anchor, and sailed swiftly  
thence ;  
A deity made smooth the mighty deep,  
And when we came to Tenedos we paid <sup>205</sup>  
Our offerings to the gods and longed for home —  
Vainly ; it pleased not unpropitious Jove  
To favor our return, and once again  
He sent among us strife. A part of us

Led by Ulysses, that sagacious prince, 210  
To please Atrides Agamemnon turned  
Their well-oared galleys back. But I, with all  
The vessels of the fleet that followed me,  
Fled on my way, perceiving that some god  
Was meditating evil. With us fled, 215  
Encouraging his men, the warlike son  
Of Tydeus. Fair-haired Menelaus came  
Later to us in Lesbos, where we planned  
For a long voyage, whether we should sail  
Around the rugged Chios, toward the isle 220  
Of Psyria, keeping that upon the left,  
Or under Chios pass beside the steeps  
Of windy Mimas. We besought the god  
That he would show a sign, and he complied,  
And bade us to Eubœa cross the deep 225  
Right in the midst, the sooner to escape  
All danger. Then the wind blew strong and shrill,  
And swiftly o'er the fishy gulfs our fleet  
Flew on, and reached Geræstus in the night.  
There, having passed the mighty deep, we made 230  
To Neptune offerings of many a thigh  
Of beeves. The fourth day dawned, and now the  
men  
Of Diomed, the mighty horseman, son  
Of Tydeus, stopped at Argos with their fleet,  
While I went on to Pylos with the wind, 235  
Which never, from the moment that the god  
First sent it o'er the waters, ceased to blow.

“ So, my dear child, I reached my home, nor knew  
Nor heard from others who among the Greeks  
Was saved, or who had perished on the way. 240  
Yet what I since have heard while here I sit  
Within my palace thou shalt duly learn.  
Nor is it what I ought to keep from thee.

“ ’T is said the Myrmidonian spearmen, led  
By great Achilles’ famous son, returned 245  
Happily home ; as happily the son  
Of Pæas, Philoctetes the renowned.  
Idomeneus brought also back to Crete  
All his companions who survived the war ;  
The sea took none of them. But ye have heard, 250  
Though far away, the fate of Atreus’ son, —  
How he came home, and how Ægisthus laid  
A plot to slay him, yet on his own head  
Drew heavy punishment, — so fortunate  
It is when he who falls by murder leaves 255  
A son ; for ’t was the monarch’s son who took  
Vengeance upon the crafty murderer  
Ægisthus, by whose hand Atrides died.  
Thou too, my friend, for thou art large of frame,  
And of a noble presence, be thou brave, 260  
That men in time to come may give thee praise.”

Then spake discreet Telemachus again : —  
“ O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,  
Ample was his revenge, and far and wide  
The Greeks will spread his fame to be the song 265  
Of future times. O might the gods confer



On me an equal power to avenge myself  
 On that importunate, overbearing crew  
 Of suitors, who insult me, and devise  
 Evil against me ! But the gods deny 270  
 Such fortune to my father and to me,  
 And all that now is left me is to bear."

Again spake Nestor the Gerenian knight :—  
 " Since thou, my friend, hast spoken words which  
     bring

What I have heard to mind, — the rumor goes 275  
 That in thy palace many suitors wait  
 About thy mother, and in spite of thee  
 Do grievous wrong. Now tell me ; dost thou yield  
 Willingly, or because the people, swayed  
 By oracles, regard thee as their foe ? 280  
 Thy father yet may come again, — who knows ? —  
 Alone, or with the other Greeks, to take  
 The vengeance which these violent deeds deserve.  
 Should blue-eyed Pallas deign to favor thee,  
 As once she watched to guard the glorious chief 285  
 Ulysses in the realm of Troy, where we,  
 The Achaians, bore such hardships, — for I ne'er  
 Have seen the gods so openly befriend  
 A man as Pallas there befriended him, —  
 Should she thus deign to favor thee and keep 290  
 Watch over thee, then haply some of these  
 Will never think of marriage rites again."

Then spake discreet Telemachus again :—  
 " O aged man ! I cannot think thy words

Will be fulfilled ! for they import too much 295  
And they amaze me. What thou sayst I wish  
May come to pass, but know it cannot be,  
Not even though the gods should will it so."

Then thus the blue-eyed goddess, Pallas, spake : —  
"Telemachus, what words have passed thy lips? 300  
Easily can a god, whene'er he will,  
In the most distant regions safely keep  
A man ; and I would rather reach my home  
Securely, after many hardships borne,  
Than perish suddenly on my return 305  
As Agamemnon perished by the guile  
Of base Ægisthus and the queen. And yet  
The gods themselves have not the power to save  
Whom most they cherish from the common doom  
When cruel fate brings on the last long sleep." 310

Discreet Telemachus made answer thus : —  
" Let us, O Mentor, talk no more of this,  
Though much we grieve ; he never will return,  
For his is the black doom of death ordained  
By the great gods. Now suffer me to ask 315  
Of Nestor further, since to him are known,  
Beyond all other men, the rules of right  
And prudence. He has governed, so men say,  
Three generations, and to me he seems  
In aspect like the ever-living gods. 320  
O Nestor, son of Neleus, truly say  
How died the monarch over mighty realms,  
Atreides Agamemnon ? Where was then

His brother Menelaus? By what arts  
Did treacherous Ægisthus plan his death, 325  
And slay a braver warrior than himself?  
Was not the brother in the Achaian town  
Of Argos? or was he a wanderer  
In other lands, which made the murderer bold?"

The knight, Gerenian Nestor, answered thus : — 330  
" I will tell all and truly. Thou hast guessed  
Rightly and as it happened. Had the son  
Of Atreus, fair-haired Menelaus, come  
From Troy, and found Ægisthus yet alive  
Within the palace, he had never flung 335  
The loose earth on his corpsè, but dogs and birds  
Had preyed upon it, lying in the fields  
Far from the city, and no woman's voice  
Of all the Greeks had raised the wail for him.  
Great was the crime he plotted. We were yet 340  
Afar, enduring the hard toils of war,  
While he, securely couched in his retreat  
At Argos, famed for steeds, with flattering words  
Corrupted Agamemnon's queen. At first  
The noble Clytemnestra turned away 345  
With horror from the crime ; for yet her heart  
Was right, and by her side there stood a bard  
With whom Atrides, when he went to Troy,  
Had left his wife with many an earnest charge.  
But when the gods and fate had spread a net 350  
For his destruction, then Ægisthus bore  
The minstrel to a desert isle, and there

Left him to be devoured by birds of prey,  
And led the queen, as willing as himself,  
To his own palace. Many a victim's thigh 355  
Upon the hallowed altars of the gods  
He offered, many a gift of ornaments  
Woven or wrought in gold he hung within  
Their temples, since at length the mighty end  
For which he hardly dared to hope was gained. 360  
We sailed together from the coast of Troy,  
Atrides, Menelaus, and myself,  
Friends to each other. When the headland height  
Of Athens, hallowed Sunium, met our eyes,  
Apollo smote with his still shafts, and slew 365  
Phrontis, Onetor's son, who steered the bark  
Of Menelaus, holding in his hands  
The rudder as the galley scudded on, —  
And skilled was he beyond all other men  
To guide a vessel when the storm was high. 370  
So there did Menelaus stay his course,  
Though eager to go on, that he might lay  
His friend in earth and pay the funeral rites.  
But setting sail again with all his fleet  
Upon the dark-blue sea, all-seeing Jove 375  
Decreed a perilous voyage. He sent forth  
His shrill-voiced hurricane, and heaped on high  
The mountain waves. There, scattering the barks  
Far from each other, part he drove to Crete,  
Where the Cydonians dwell, beside the stream 380  
Of Jardanus. A smooth and pointed rock

Just on the bounds of Gortys stands amidst  
The dark-blue deep. The south wind thitherward  
Sweeps a great sea towards Phœstus, and against  
The headland on the left, where that small rock <sup>385</sup>  
Meets and withstands the mighty wave. The ships  
Were driven on this, and scarce the crews escaped  
With life ; the ships were dashed against the crags  
And wrecked, save five, and these, with their black  
prows,

Were swept toward Egypt by the winds and  
waves. 390

“ Thus adding to his wealth and gathering gold  
He roamed the ocean in his ships among  
Men of strange speech. Ægisthus meantime  
planned

His guilty deeds at home ; he slew the king  
Atrides, and the people took his yoke. 395

Seven years in rich Mycenæ he bore rule,  
And on the eighth, to his destruction, came  
The nobly-born Orestes, just returned  
From Athens, and cut off that man of blood,  
The crafty wretch Ægisthus, by whose hand 400  
Fell his illustrious father. Then he bade

The Argives to the solemn burial-feast  
Of his bad mother and the craven wretch  
Ægisthus. Menelaus, that same day,  
The great in war, arrived, and brought large  
wealth — 405

So large his galleys could contain no more.

“ And thou, my friend, be thou not long away,  
Wandering from home, thy rich possessions left,  
And in thy palace-halls a lawless crew,  
Lest they devour thy substance, and divide 410  
Thy goods, and thou have crossed the sea in vain.  
Yet must I counsel and enjoin on thee  
To visit Menelaus, who has come  
Just now from lands and nations of strange men,  
Whence one could hardly hope for a return ; 415  
Whom once the tempest’s violence had driven  
Into that great wide sea o’er which the birds  
Of heaven could scarce fly hither in a year,  
Such is its fearful vastness. Go thou now,  
Thou with thy ship and friends ; or if thou choose 420  
The way by land, a car and steeds are here,  
And here my sons to guide thee to the town  
Of hallowed Lacedæmon, there to find  
The fair-haired Menelaus. Earnestly  
Beseech of him that he declare the truth. 425  
Falsely he will not speak, for he is wise.”

He spake ; the sun went down ; the darkness crept  
Over the earth, and blue-eyed Pallas said : —  
“ Most wisely hast thou spoken, ancient man.  
Now cut ye out the tongues, and mingle wine, 430  
That we to Neptune and the other gods  
May pour libations, and then think of rest ;  
For now the hour is come ; the light is gone,  
Nor at a feast in honor of the gods  
Should we long sit, but in good time withdraw.” 435

Jove's daughter spake ; they hearkened to her  
words ;

The heralds came to them, and on their hands  
Poured water ; boys began to fill the bowls  
To the hard brim, and ministered to each  
From left to right. Then threw they to the flames 440  
The victims' tongues, and, rising, poured on earth  
Wine to the gods ; and when that rite was paid,  
And when their thirst was satiate, Pallas rose  
With nobly-born Telemachus to go  
To their good ship, but Nestor still detained 445  
The twain, and chidingly bespake them thus : —

“ Now Jove and all the other gods forbid  
That ye should go from me to your good ship,  
As from some half-clad wretch, too poor to own  
Mantles and blankets in whose soft warm folds 450  
He and his guests might sleep ; but I have both —  
Mantles and blankets — beautifully wrought,  
And never shall the son of that great man  
Ulysses lie upon a galley's deck  
While I am living. After me I hope 455  
My sons, who dwell within my palace-halls,  
Will duly welcome all who enter here.”

And thus again the blue-eyed Pallas spake : —  
“ Well hast thou said, my aged friend, and well  
Doth it become Telemachus to heed 460  
Thy words, for that were best. Let him remain  
With thee and sleep in thine abode, while I  
Repair to our black ship, encouraging

The crew, and setting them their proper tasks,  
For I am eldest of them all ; the rest 465  
Are young men yet, and moved by friendship joined  
Our enterprise ; the peers in age are they  
Of the large-souled Telemachus. To-night  
I sleep within the hull of our black ship,  
And sail with early morning for the land 470  
Of the Cauconians, large of soul, from whom --  
A debt is due me, neither new nor small.  
Send meantime from thy palace in a car,  
And with thy son, this youth, and be the steeds  
The fleetest and the strongest in thy stalls." 475

The blue-eyed Pallas, having spoken thus,  
Passed like an eagle out of sight, and all  
Were seized with deep amazement as they saw.  
The aged monarch, wondering at the sight,  
Took by the hand Telemachus, and said : — 480

“ Of craven temper, and unapt for war,  
O friend, thou canst not be, since thus the gods  
Attend and guide thee in thy youth. And this,  
Of all the gods whose dwelling is in heaven,  
Can be no other than the spoiler-queen 485  
Pallas, the child of Jove, who also held  
Thy father in such eminent esteem  
Among the Grecians. Deign to favor us,  
O queen ! bestow on me and on my sons  
And on my venerable spouse the meed 490  
Of special glory. I will bring to thee  
A sacrifice, a broad-horned yearling steer,



Which never man hath tamed or led beneath  
The yoke. Her will I bring with gilded horns,  
And lay an offering on thine altar-fires.” 495

Such were his words, and Pallas heard the prayer,  
And then Gerenian Nestor led the way,  
And with his sons and sons-in-law approached  
His glorious palace. When they came within  
The monarch’s sumptuous halls, each took his  
place 500

In order on the couches and the thrones.  
The old man mingled for them as they came  
A bowl of delicate wine, eleven years old,  
Drawn by the damsel cupbearer, who took  
Its cover from the jar. The aged chief 505  
Mingled it in the bowl, and, pouring out  
A part to Pallas, offered earnest prayer  
To her, who sprang from ægis-bearing Jove.

When due libations had been made, and all  
Drank till they wished no more, most went away, 510  
Each to his home to sleep ; but Nestor made  
Telemachus, the son of the great chief  
Ulysses, rest upon a sumptuous couch  
Within the echoing hall, and near to him  
The chief of squadrons, skilled to wield the spear, 515  
Peisistratus, who only of his sons  
Abode in Nestor’s halls unwedded yet ;  
While in an inner room of that tall pile  
The monarch slumbered on a bed of state,  
Decked for him by the labors of his queen. 520

Soon as the daughter of the dawn appeared,  
The rosy-fingered Morning, Nestor left  
His bed and went abroad, and took his seat  
On smooth white stones before his lofty doors,  
That glistened as with oil, on which before 533  
Sat Neleus, wise in council as the gods.  
But he had yielded to the will of fate,  
And passed into the Underworld. Now sat  
Gerenian Nestor in his father's place,  
The guardian of the Greeks. Around his seat, 539  
Just from the chambers of their rest, his sons  
Echephron, Stratius, and Aretus came,  
Perseus, and Thrasymedes ; after these  
Came brave Peisistratus, the sixth and last.  
They led Telemachus, the godlike youth, 535  
And placed him near them. The Gerenian knight  
Nestor began, and thus bespake his sons : —

“ Do quickly what I ask, dear sons, and aid  
To render Pallas, first of all the gods,  
Propitious, — Pallas, who has deigned to come, 540  
And at a solemn feast to manifest  
Herself to me. Let one of you go forth  
Among the fields, and bring a heifer thence,  
Led by the herdsman. To the dark-hulled ship  
Of the large-souled Telemachus I bid 545  
Another son repair, and bring the crew  
Save only two ; and let another call  
Laërceus hither, skilled to work in gold,  
That he may plate with gold the heifer's horns.

Let all the rest remain to bid the maids 550  
 Within prepare a sumptuous feast, and bring  
 Seats, wood, and limpid water from the fount."

He spake, and all were busy. From the field  
 The bullock came ; from the swift-sailing bark  
 Came the companions of the gallant youth 555  
 Telemachus ; with all his implements —  
 Hammer and anvil, and well-jointed tongs —  
 With which he wrought, the goldsmith also came,  
 And to be present at the sacred rites  
 Pallas came likewise. Nestor, aged knight, 560  
 Brought forth the gold ; the artisan prepared  
 The metal, and about the bullock's horns  
 Wound it, that Pallas might with pleasure see  
 The victim so adorned. Then Stratius grasped  
 The horns, and, aided by Echephron, led 565  
 The bullock. From his room Aretus brought  
 A laver filled with water in one hand,  
 And in the other hand a canister  
 Of cakes, while Thrasymedes, great in war,  
 Stood near with a sharp axe, about to smite 570  
 The victim. Perseus held a vase to catch  
 The blood, while Nestor, aged horseman, took  
 Water and cakes, and offering first a part,  
 And flinging the shorn forelock to the flames,  
 Prayed to the goddess Pallas fervently. 575

And now, when they had prayed, and flung the  
 cakes,  
 The large-souled Thrasymedes, Nestor's son,

Struck, where he stood, the blow ; the bullock's  
strength

Gave way. At once the daughters of the king,  
And his sons' wives, and queen Eurydicè, — 520

Nestor's chaste wife, and daughter eldest born  
Of Clymenus, broke forth in shrilly cries.

From the great earth the sons then lifted up  
And held the victim's head. Peisistratus,  
The chief of squadrons, slew it. When the  
blood 525

Had ceased to flow, and life had left its limbs,  
They quickly severed joint from joint ; they hewed  
The thighs away, and duly covered them  
With caul, a double fold, on which they laid  
Raw strips of flesh. The aged monarch burned 590  
These over the cleft wood, and poured dark wine  
Upon them, while beside him stood the youths  
With five-pronged spits ; and when the thighs were  
burned

And entrails tasted, all the rest they carved  
Into small portions and transfix'd with spits, 595  
And roasted, holding the sharp spits in hand.

Meantime, fair Polycastè, youngest born  
Of Nestor's daughters, gave Telemachus  
The bath ; and after he had bathed she shed  
A rich oil over him, and in a cloak 600  
Of noble texture and a tunic robed  
The prince, who, like a god in presence, left  
The bath, and took his place where Nestor sat,

The shepherd of the people. When the youths  
Had roasted well and from the spits with-  
drawn

605

The flesh, they took their places at the feast.  
Then rose up chosen men, and poured the wine  
Into the cups of gold ; and when at length  
The thirst and appetite were both allayed,  
The knight, Gerenian Nestor, thus began :—  
“ Rise now, my sons ; join to the bright-haired  
steeds

610

My car, and let Telemachus depart.”

He spake ; they hearkened and obeyed, and  
straight

Yoked the swift horses to the car. Then came  
The matron of the household, laying bread  
And wine within the car, and dainties such  
As make a prince's fare. Telemachus  
Then climbed into the sumptuous seat. The son  
Of Nestor and the chief of armed bands,  
Peisistratus, climbed also, took his place  
Beside him, grasped the reins, and with the lash  
Urged on the coursers. Not unwillingly  
They darted toward the plain, and left behind  
The lofty Pylos. All that day they shook  
The yoke on both their necks. The sun went  
down ;

615

620

625

The highways lay in darkness when they came  
To Pheræ and the abode of Diocles,  
Son of Orsilochus, who claimed to be

The offspring of Alpheius. They with him  
Found welcome there, and there that night they  
slept. 630

And when the rosy-fingered Morn appeared,  
They yoked the horses, climbed the shining car,  
And issued from the palace gate beneath  
The sounding portico. Peisistratus  
Wielded the lash to urge the coursers on, 635  
And not unwillingly they flew and reached  
A land of harvests. Here the travellers found  
Their journey's end, so swiftly those fleet steeds  
Had borne them on. And now the sun went  
down,  
And darkness gathered over all the ways. 640

## BOOK IV.

THEY came to Lacedæmon's valley, seamed  
With dells, and to the palace of its king,  
The glorious Menelaus, whom they found  
Within, and at a wedding banquet, made  
Both for his blameless daughter and his son, 5  
And many guests. Her he must send away,  
Bride of the son of that invincible chief,  
Achilles. He betrothed her while in Troy,  
And gave his kingly word, and now the gods  
Fulfilled it by the marriage. He was now 10

Sending her forth, with steeds and cars, to reach  
The noble city of the Myrmidons,  
Where ruled her consort. From the Spartan coast  
He brought Alector's daughter for his son,  
The gallant Megapenthes, borne to him 15  
By a handmaiden in his later years.  
For not to Helen had the gods vouchsafed  
Yet other offspring, after she had brought  
A lovely daughter forth, Hermione,  
Like golden Venus both in face and form. 20

So banqueting the neighbors and the friends  
Of glorious Menelaus sat beneath  
The lofty ceiling of those spacious halls,  
Delighted with the feast. A sacred bard  
Amidst them touched the harp and sang to them 25  
While, as the song began, two dancers sprang  
Into the midst and trod the measure there

But they — the hero-youth Telemachus  
And Nestor's eminent son — were at the gate,  
And standing in the entrance with their steeds. 30  
The worthy Eteoneus, coming forth, —  
The trusty servant of the glorious son  
Of Atreus, — saw, and hastening thence to tell  
The shepherd of the people, through the hall  
He came to him, and spake these winged words : — 35

“ O Menelaus, foster-child of Jove,  
Two strangers have arrived, two men who seem  
Descended from almighty Jupiter.  
Shall we then loose the harness from their steeds,

Or bid them elsewhere seek a friendly host?" 40

The fair-haired king indignantly replied :—

“Nay, Eteoneus, thou hast not been wont,

Son of Boëthus, thus to play the fool.

Thou pratest idly, like a child. Ourselves

Have sāt, as guests, at generous banquets given 45

By other men, when journeying hitherward

In hope that Jove might grant a respite here

From our disasters. Hasten, then, to loose

The steeds, and bring the strangers to the feast.”

He spake ; the attendant hastened forth and  
called 50

The other trusty servitors, with charge

To follow. They unyoked the sweaty steeds,

And bound them to the stalls, and gave them oats,

With which they mingled the white barley-grains,

And close against the shining wall they placed 55

The car, and then they led the guests within

The sumptuous palace. Entering, these admired

The palace of the foster-child of Jove,

For like the splendor of the sun and moon

Its glory was. They with delighted eyes 60

Gazed, and, descending to the polished baths,

They bathed. The attendant maids who at the bath

Had ministered, anointing them with oil,

Arrayed the stranger guests in fleecy cloaks

And tunics. Each sat down upon a throne 65

Near to Atrides. Now a handmaid brought

A beautiful ewer of gold, and laver wrought



Of silver, and poured water for their hands,  
And spread a polished table near their seat ;  
The reverend matron of the household came 70  
With bread, and set before them many a dish  
Gathered from all the feast. The carver next  
Brought chargers lifted high, and in them meats  
Of every flavor, and before them placed  
Beakers of gold. The fair-haired monarch gave 75  
His hand to each, and then bespoke them thus : —

“Now taste our banquet and rejoice, and when  
Ye are refreshed with food we will inquire  
Who ye may be ; for ye are not of those  
Whose race degenerates, ye are surely born 80  
Of sceptred kings, the favorites of Jove.  
Ignoble men have never sons like you.”

Thus having said, and taking in his hands  
A fatling bullock's chine, which menials brought  
Roasted, and placed beside the king in sign 85  
Of honor, this he laid before his guests.  
And they put forth their hands and banqueted ;  
And when the calls of hunger and of thirst  
At length were stilled, Telemachus inclined  
His head toward Nestor's son, that no one else 90  
Might listen to his words, and thus he said : —

“See, son of Nestor, my beloved friend,  
In all these echoing rooms the sheen of brass,  
Of gold, of amber, and of ivory ;  
Such is the palace of Olympian Jove 95  
Within its walls. How many things are here

Of priceless worth ! I wonder as I gaze."

The fair-haired Menelaus heard him speak,  
And thus accosted both with winged words :—

" Dear sons, no mortal man may vie with Jove, 100  
Whose palace and possessions never know  
Decay, but other men may vie or not  
In wealth with me. 'T was after suffering  
And wandering long that in my fleet I brought  
My wealth with me, and landed on this coast 105  
In the eighth year. For I had roamed afar  
To Cyprus and to Phœnicè, and where  
The Egyptians dwell, and Ethiopia's sons,  
And the Sidonians, and the Erembian race,  
And to the coast of Lybia, where the lambs 110  
Are yeaned with budding horns. There do the ewes  
Thrice in the circle of the year bring forth  
Their young. There both the master of the herd  
And herdsman know no lack of cheese, or flesh,  
Or of sweet milk ; for there the herds yield milk 115  
The whole year round. While I was roaming thus,  
And gathering store of wealth, another slew  
My brother, unforewarned, and through the fraud  
Of his own guilty consort. Therefore small  
Is the content I find in bearing rule 120  
O'er these possessions. Ye have doubtless heard  
This from your parents, be they who they may ;  
For much have I endured, and I have lost  
A palace, a most noble dwelling-place,  
Full of things rare and precious. Even now 125

Would I possessed within my palace here  
But the third part of these ; and would that they  
Were yet alive who perished on the plain  
Of Troy afar from Argos and its steeds !  
Yet while I grieve and while I mourn them all, 130  
Here, sitting in my palace, I by turns  
Indulge my heart in weeping, and by turns  
I pause, for with continual sorrow comes  
A weariness of spirit. Yet, in truth,  
For none of all those warriors, though their fate 135  
Afflicts me sorely, do I so much grieve  
As for one hero. When I think of him,  
The feast and couch are joyless, since, of all  
The Achaian chiefs, none brought so much to pass  
As did Ulysses, both in what he wrought 140  
And what he suffered. Great calamities  
Fell to his lot in life, and to my own  
Grief for his sake that cannot be consoled.  
Long has he been divided from his friends,  
And whether he be living now or dead 145  
We know not. Old Laertes, the sage queen  
Penelope, and young Telemachus,  
Whom, when he went to war he left new-born  
At home, are sorrowing somewhere for his sake."

He spake, and woke anew the young man's grief 150  
For his lost father. From his eyelids fell  
Tears at the hearing of his father's name,  
And with both hands he held before his eyes  
The purple mantle. Menelaus saw

His tears, and pondered, doubting which were  
best, — 155

To let the stranger of his own accord  
Speak of his father, or to question him  
At first, and then to tell him all he knew.

As thus he pondered, Helen, like in form  
To Dian of the golden distaff, left 160  
Her high-roofed chamber, where the air was sweet  
With perfumes, and approached. Adrasta placed  
A seat for her of costly workmanship ;  
Alcippè brought a mat of soft light wool,  
And Phylo with a silver basket came, 165  
Given by Alcandra, wife of Polybus,  
Who dwelt at Thebes, in Egypt, and whose house  
Was rich in things of price. Two silver baths  
He gave to Menelaus, tripods two,  
And talents ten of gold. His wife bestowed 170  
Beautiful gifts on Helen, — one of gold,  
A distaff ; one a silver basket edged  
With gold and round in form. This Phylo brought  
Heaped with spun yarn and placed before the queen ;  
Upon it lay the distaff, wrapped in wool 175  
Of color like the violet. Helen there  
Sat down, a footstool at her feet, and straight  
Questioned with earnest words her husband thus : —

“ Say, Menelaus, foster-child of Jove,  
Is it yet known what lineage these men claim, — 180  
These visitants ? And what I now shall say,  
Will it be false or true ? Yet must I speak.

Woman or man I think I never saw  
 So like another as this youth, on whom  
 I look with deep astonishment, is like 185  
 Telemachus, the son whom our great chief  
 Ulysses left at home a tender babe  
 When ye Achaïans for my guilty sake  
 Went forth to wage the bloody war with Troy."

And fair-haired Menelaus answered her : — 190  
 " Yea, wife, so deem I as it seems to thee.  
 Such are his feet, his hands, the cast of the eye,  
 His head, the hair upon his brow. Just now,  
 In speaking of Ulysses, as I told  
 How he had toiled and suffered for my sake, 195  
 The stranger held the purple cloak before  
 His eyes, and from the lids dropped bitter tears."

Peisistratus, the son of Nestor, spake  
 In answer : " Menelaus, foster-child  
 Of Jove and son of Atreus ! sovereign king ! 200  
 He is, as thou hast said, that hero's son ;  
 But he is modest, and he deems that ill  
 It would become him, on arriving here,  
 If he should venture in discourse while thou  
 Art present, in whose voice we take delight 205  
 As if it were the utterance of a god.  
 The knight Gerenian Nestor sent me forth  
 To guide him hither, — for he earnestly  
 Desired to see thee, that thou mightest give  
 Counsel in what he yet should say or do. 210  
 For bitterly a son, who finds at home

No others to befriend him, must lament  
The absence of a father. So it is  
With young Telemachus ; for far away  
His father is, and in the land are none 215  
Who have the power to shelter him from wrong."

The fair-haired Menelaus answered thus : —  
"O wonder ! Then the son of one most dear,  
Who for my sake so oft has braved and borne  
The conflicts of the battle-field, hath come 220  
Beneath my roof. I thought that I should greet  
His father with a warmer welcome here  
Than any other of the Argive race,  
When Jove the Olympian Thunderer should grant  
A safe return to us across the deep 225  
In our good ships. I would have founded here  
For him a city in Argos, and have built  
Dwellings, and would have brought from Ithaca  
Him and his son, and all his wealth and all  
His people. To this end I would have caused 230  
Some neighboring district where my sway is owned  
To be dispeopled. Dwelling here we oft  
Should then have met each other, and no cause  
Would e'er have parted us, two faithful friends  
Delighting in each other, till at last 235  
Came Death's black cloud to wrap us in its shade.  
A god, no doubt, hath seen in this a good  
Too great for us, and thus to him alone,  
Unhappy man ! denied a safe return."

He spake ; his words awoke in every heart 240

Grief for the absent hero's sake. Then wept  
The Argive Helen, child of Jove ; then wept  
Telemachus ; nor tearless were the eyes  
Of Nestor's son, for to his mind arose  
The memory of the good Antilochus, 245  
Slain by the bright Aurora's eminent son ;  
Of him he thought, and spake these winged words :—

“ O son of Atreus ! aged Nestor saith,  
When in his palace we discourse of thee  
And ask each other's thought, that thou art wise 250  
Beyond all other men. Now, if thou mayst,  
Indulge me, for not willingly I weep  
Thus at the evening feast, and soon will Morn,  
Child of the Dawn, appear. I do not blame  
This sorrow for whoever meets his fate 255  
And dies ; the only honors we can pay  
To those unhappy mortals is to shred  
Our locks away, and wet our cheeks with tears.  
I lost a brother, not the least in worth  
Among the Argives, whom thou must have seen. 260  
I knew him not : I never saw his face ;  
Yet is it said Antilochus excelled  
The others ; swift of foot, and brave in war.”

The fair-haired Menelaus answered him :—  
“ Since thou my friend hast spoken thus, as one 265  
Discreet in word and deed, of riper years  
Than thou, might speak and act, — for thou art born  
Of such a father, and thy words are wise, —  
And easy is it to discern the son

Of one on whom Saturnius has bestowed 270  
Both at the birth-hour and in wedded life  
His blessing ; as he gives to Nestor now  
A calm old age that lapses pleasantly,  
Within his palace-halls, from day to day,  
And sons wise-minded, mighty with the spear, — 275  
Then let us lay aside this sudden grief  
That has o’ertaken us, and only think  
Of banqueting. Let water now be poured  
Upon our hands ; there will be time enough  
To-morrow for discourse ; Telemachus 280  
And I will then engage in mutual talk.”

He spake, Asphalion, who with diligent heed  
Served the great Menelaus, on their hands  
Poured water, and they shared the meats that lay  
Upon the board. But Helen, Jove-born dame, 285  
Had other thoughts, and with the wine they drank  
Mingled a drug, an antidote to grief  
And anger, bringing quick forgetfulness  
Of all life’s evils. Whoso drinks, when once  
It is infused and in the cup, that day 290  
Shall never wet his cheeks with tears, although  
His father and his mother lie in death,  
Nor though his brother or beloved son  
Fall butchered by the sword before his eyes.  
Such sovereign drugs she had, that child of Jove, 295  
Given her by Polydamna, wife of Thon,  
A dame of Egypt, where the bounteous soil  
Brings forth abundantly its potent herbs,



Of healing some and some of bane, and where  
 Dwell the physicians who excel in skill 300  
 All other men, for they are of the race  
 Of Pæon. Now when Helen in the cups  
 Had placed the drug, and bidden them to pour  
 The wine upon it, thus she spake again : —

“ Atrides Menelaus, reared by Jove, 305  
 And ye the sons of heroes ! — Jupiter  
 The sovereign, gives, at pleasure, good and ill  
 To one or to another, for his power  
 Is infinite, — now sitting in these halls,  
 Feast and enjoy free converse. I will speak 310  
 What suits the occasion. I could not relate,  
 I could not even name, the many toils  
 Borne by Ulysses, stout of heart. I speak  
 Only of what that valiant warrior did  
 And suffered once in Troy, where ye of Greece 315  
 Endured such hardships. He had given himself  
 Unseemly stripes, and o’er his shoulders flung  
 Vile garments like a slave’s, and entered thus  
 The enemy’s town, and walked its spacious streets.  
 Another man he seemed in that disguise, — 320  
 A beggar, though when at the Achaian fleet  
 So different was the semblance that he wore.  
 He entered Ilium thus transformed, and none  
 Knew who it was that passed, but I perceived,  
 And questioned him ; he turned my quest aside 325  
 With crafty answers. After I had seen  
 The bath administered, anointed him

And clothed him, and had sworn a solemn oath  
Not to reveal his visit to the men  
Of Ilium till he reached again the tents 330  
And galleys, then he opened to me all  
The plans of the Achaïans. Leaving me,  
On his return he slew with his long spear  
Full many a Trojan, and in safety reached  
The Argive camp with tidings for the host. 335  
Then wept aloud the Trojan dames, but I  
Was glad at heart, for I already longed  
For my old home, and deeply I deplored  
The evil fate that Venus brought on me,  
Who led me thither from my own dear land, 340  
And from my daughter and my marriage-bower,  
And from my lawful spouse, in whom I missed  
No noble gift of person or of mind."

Then fair-haired Menelaus said to her : —  
"All thou hast spoken, woman, is most true. 345  
Of many a valiant warrior I have known  
The counsels and the purposes, and far  
Have roamed in many lands, but never yet  
My eyes have looked on such another man  
As was Ulysses, of a heart so bold 350  
And such endurance. Witness what he did  
And bore, the heroic man, what time we sat,  
The bravest of the Argives, pent within  
The wooden horse, about to bring to Troy  
Slaughter and death. Thou camest to the place, 355  
Moved, as it seemed, by some divinity

Who thought to give the glory of the day  
To Troy. Deiphobus, the godlike chief,  
Was with thee. Thrice about the hollow frame  
That held the ambush thou didst walk and touch 360  
Its sides, and call the Achaian chiefs by name,  
And imitate the voices of the wives  
Of all the Argives. Diomed and I  
Sat with the great Ulysses in the midst,  
And with him heard thy call, and rose at once 365  
To sally forth or answer from within ;  
But he forbade, impatient as we were,  
And so restrained us. All the Achaian chiefs  
Kept silence save Anticlus, who alone  
Began to speak, when, with his powerful hands, 370  
Ulysses pressed together instantly  
The opening lips, and saved us all, and thus  
Held them till Pallas lured thee from the spot."

Then spake discreet Telemachus again : —  
" Atrides Menelaus, reared by Jove, 375  
Ruler of tribes ! the harder was his lot,  
Since even thus he could not shun the stroke  
Of death, not though a heart of steel were his.  
But now dismiss us to our beds, that there,  
Couched softly, we may welcome balmy sleep." 380

He spake, and Argive Helen called her maids  
To make up couches in the portico,  
And throw fair purple blankets over them,  
And tapestry above, and cover all  
With shaggy cloaks. Forth from the palace halls 385

They went with torches, and made ready soon  
The couches ; † thither heralds led the guests.  
There in the vestibule Telemachus,  
The hero, and with him the eminent son  
Of Nestor, took their rest. Meanwhile the son 390  
Of Atreus lay within an inner room  
Of that magnificent pile, and near to him  
The glorious lady, long-robed Helen, slept.  
But when at length the daughter of the Dawn,  
The rosy-fingered Morning, brought her light, 395  
Then Menelaus, great in battle, rose,  
Put on his garments, took his trenchant sword,  
And, having hung it on his shoulder, laced  
The shapely sandals to his shining feet,  
And issued from his chamber like a god 400  
In aspect. Near Telemachus he took  
His seat, and calling him by name he spake : —

“What urgent cause, my brave Telemachus,  
Brings thee to sacred Lacedæmon o’er  
The breast of the great ocean? Frankly say, 405  
Is it a private or a public need?”

And thus discreet Telemachus replied : —  
“Atrides Menelaus, reared by Jove,  
Ruler of nations ! I am come to ask  
News of my father, if thou knowest aught. 410  
My heritage is wasting ; my rich fields  
Are made a desolation. Enemies  
Swarm in my palace, and from day to day  
Slaughter my flocks and slow-paced horned herds ;

My mother's suitors they, and measureless 415  
Their insolence. And therefore am I come  
To clasp thy knees, and pray thee to relate  
The manner of my father's sorrowful death  
As thou hast seen it with thine eyes, or heard  
Its story from some wandering man,—for sure 420  
His mother brought him forth to wretchedness  
Beyond the common lot. I ask thee not  
To soften aught in the sad history  
Through tenderness to me, or kind regard,  
But tell me plainly all that thou dost know ; 425  
And I beseech thee, if at any time  
My father, good Ulysses, brought to pass  
Aught that he undertook for thee in word  
Or act while ye were in the realm of Troy,  
Where the Greeks suffered sorely, bear it now 430  
In mind, and let me have the naked truth."

Then Menelaus of the amber locks  
Drew a deep sigh, and thus in answer said :—  
"Heavens! they would climb into a brave man's bed,  
These craven weaklings. But as when a hart 435  
Has hid her new-born suckling fawns within  
The lair of some fierce lion, and gone forth  
Herself to range the mountain-sides and feed  
Among the grassy lawns, the lion comes  
Back to the place and brings them sudden death, 440  
So will Ulysses bring a bloody fate  
Upon the suitor crew. O father Jove,  
And Pallas, and Apollo! I could wish

That now, with prowess such as once was his  
When he, of yore, in Lesbos nobly built, 445  
Rising to strive with Philomela's son,  
In wrestling threw him heavily, and all  
The Greeks rejoiced, Ulysses might engage  
The suitors. Short were then their term of life,  
And bitter would the nuptial banquet be. 450  
Now for the questions thou hast put, and craved  
From me a true reply, I will not seek  
To pass them by with talk of other things,  
Nor yet deceive thee, but of all that once  
Was told me by the Ancient of the Deep, 455  
Whose words are truth, I shall keep nothing back.

“In Egypt still, though longing to come home,  
The gods detained me ; for I had not paid  
The sacrifice of chosen hecatombs,  
And ever do the gods require of us 460  
Remembrance of their laws. There is an isle  
Within the billowy sea before you reach  
The coast of Egypt, — Pharos is its name, —  
At such a distance as a ship could pass  
In one whole day with a shrill breeze astern. 465  
A sheltered haven lies within that isle,  
Whence the good ships go forth with fresh supplies  
Of water. There the gods constrained my stay  
For twenty days, and never in that time  
Blew favoring winds across the waters, such 470  
As bear the galley over the great deep.  
Now would our stores of food have been consumed,

Now would the courage of my men have died,  
Had not a goddess pitied me, and come  
To my relief, by name Idothea, born  
To the great Proteus, Ancient of the Deep.  
For she was moved by my distress, and came  
To me while I was wandering alone,  
Apart from all the rest. They through the isle  
Roamed everywhere from place to place, and,  
                    pinched

With hunger, threw the hook for fish. She came,  
And, standing near, accosted me and said :—

“ ‘ Stranger, thou art an idiot, or at least  
Of careless mood, or else art willingly  
Neglectful, and art pleased with suffering,  
That thou dost linger in this isle so long  
And find no means to leave it, while the hearts  
Of thy companions faint with the delay.’

“ She spake, and I replied : ‘ Whoe’er thou art,  
O goddess, let me say, not willingly 490  
I linger here. I surely must have sinned  
Against the immortal dwellers of high heaven ;  
But tell me — for the gods know all things — who  
Of all the immortals holds me windbound here,  
Hindering my voyage ; tell me also how 495  
To reach my home across the fishy deep.’

“ I ended, and the glorious goddess said  
In answer : ‘ Stranger, I will truly speak ;  
The deathless Ancient of the Deep, whose words  
Are ever true, Egyptian Proteus, oft

Here makes his haunt. To him are fully known —  
For he is Neptune's subject — all the depths  
Of the great ocean. It is said I owe  
To him my birth. If him thou canst insnare  
And seize, he will disclose to thee thy way 505  
And all its distances, and tell thee how  
To reach thy home across the fishy deep ;  
And further will reveal, if so he choose,  
O foster-child of Jove, whate'er of good  
Or ill has in thy palace come to pass, 510  
While thou wert wandering long and wearily.'

"So said the goddess, and I spake again : —  
'Explain by what device to snare and hold  
The aged deity, lest he foreknow  
Or else suspect our purpose and escape. 515  
'T were hard for mortals to constrain a god.'

"I ended, and the glorious goddess thus  
Made answer : 'When the climbing sun has reached  
The middle heaven, the Ancient of the Deep,  
Who ne'er deceives, emerges from the waves, 520  
And, covered with the dark scum of the sea,  
Walks forth, and in a cavern vault lies down.  
Thither fair Halosydna's progeny,  
The sea-calves from the hoary ocean, throng,  
Rank with the bitter odor of the brine, 525  
And slumber near him. With the break of day  
I will conduct thee thither and appoint  
Thy place, but thou shalt choose to go with thee  
Three of the bravest men in thy good ships.



And let me now relate the stratagems 530  
Of the old prophet. He at first will count  
The sea-calves, going o'er them all by fives ;  
And when he has beheld and numbered all,  
Amidst them all will he lie down, as lies  
A shepherd midst his flock. And then, as soon 535  
As ye behold him stretched at length, exert  
Your utmost strength to hold him there, although  
He strive and struggle to escape your hands ;  
For he will try all stratagems, and take  
The form of every reptile on the earth, 540  
And turn to water and to raging flame, —  
Yet hold him firmly still, and all the more  
Make fast the bands. When he again shall take  
The form in which thou sawest him asleep,  
Desist from force, and loose the bands that held 545  
The ancient prophet. Ask of him what god  
Afflicts thee thus, and by what means to cross  
The fishy deep and find thy home again.'

“ Thus having said, the goddess straightway sprang  
Into the billowy ocean, while I sought 550  
The galleys, where they rested on the sand,  
With an uneasy spirit. When I reached  
The ship and shore we made our evening meal.  
The hallowed night came down ; we lay and slept  
Upon the sea-beach. When the Morning came, 555  
The rosy-fingered daughter of the Dawn,  
Forth on the border of the mighty main  
I went, and prayed the immortals fervently.

I led three comrades, whom I trusted most  
In all adventures. Entering the depths 560  
Of the great sea, the goddess brought us thence  
Four skins of sea-calves newly flayed, that thus  
We might deceive her father. Then she scooped  
Beds for us in the sea-sand, and sat down  
To wait his coming. We were near to her, 565  
And there she laid us duly down, and threw  
A skin o'er each. Now did our ambush seem  
Beyond endurance, for the noisome smell  
Of those sea-nourished creatures sickened us ;  
And who could bear to sleep beside a whale ? 570  
But she bethought her of an antidote,  
A sovereign one, and so relieved us all.  
To each she brought ambrosia, placing it  
Beneath his nostrils, and the sweets it breathed  
O'ercame the animal odor. All the morn 575  
We waited patiently. The sea-calves came  
From ocean in a throng, and laid themselves  
In rows along the margin of the sea.  
At noon emerged the aged seer, and found  
His well-fed sea-calves. Going o'er them all 580  
He counted them, ourselves among the rest,  
With no misgiving of the fraud, and then  
He laid him down to rest. We rushed with shouts  
Upon him suddenly, and in our arms  
Caught him ; nor did the aged seer forget 585  
His stratagems ; and first he took the shape  
Of a maned lion, of a serpent next,

Then of a panther, then of a huge boar,  
Then turned to flowing water, then became  
A tall tree full of leaves. With resolute hearts 590  
We held him fast, until the aged seer  
Was wearied out, in spite of all his wiles.  
And questioned me in speech at last and said : —

“ ‘ O son of Atreus ! who of all the gods  
Hath taught thee how to take me in this snare, 595  
Unwilling as I am ? What wouldst thou have ? ’

“ He spake ; I answered : ‘ Aged prophet, well  
Thou knowest. Why deceitfully inquire ?  
It is that I am held a prisoner long  
Within this isle, and vainly seek the means 600  
Of my escape, and grief consumes my heart.  
Now — since the gods know all things — tell me this,  
What deity it is, that, hindering thus  
My voyage, keeps me here, and tell me how  
To cross the fishy deep and reach my home.’ 605

“ Such were my words, and he in answer said : —  
‘ But thou to Jove and to the other gods  
Shouldst first have paid acceptable sacrifice,  
And shouldst have then embarked to reach with  
speed

Thy native land across the dark-blue deep. 610  
Now it is not thy fate to see again  
Thy friends, thy stately palace, and the land  
That saw thy birth, until thou stand once more  
Beside the river that through Egypt flows  
From Jove, and offer sacred hecatombs 615

To the ever-living gods inhabiting  
The boundless heaven, and they will speed thee  
forth

Upon the voyage thou dost long to make.'

"He spake. My heart was broken as I heard  
His bidding to recross the shadowy sea 620  
To Egypt, for the way was difficult  
And long; and yet I answered him and said:—

" 'Duly will I perform, O aged seer,  
What thou commandest. But I pray thee tell,  
And truly, whether all the sons of Greece 625  
Whom Nestor and myself, in setting sail,  
Left on the Trojan coast, have since returned  
Safe with their galleys, or have any died  
Untimely in their ships or in the arms  
Of their companions since the war was closed?' 630

"I spake; again he answered me and said:—  
'Why dost thou ask, Atrides, since to know  
Thou needest not, nor is it well to explore  
The secrets of my mind? Thou canst not, sure,  
Refrain from tears when thou shalt know the  
whole. 635

Many are dead, and many left in Troy.  
Two leaders only of the well-armed Greeks  
Were slain returning; in that combat thou  
Didst bear a part; one, living yet, is kept,  
Far in the mighty main, from his return. 640

" 'Amid his well-oared galleys Ajax died.  
For Neptune first had driven him on the rocks

Of Gyræ, yet had saved him from the sea ;  
And he, though Pallas hated him, had yet  
Been rescued, but for uttering boastful words, 645  
Which drew his fate upon him. He had said  
That he, in spite of all the gods, would come  
Safe from those mountain waves. When Neptune  
heard

The boaster's challenge, instantly he laid  
His strong hand on the trident, smote the rock 650  
And cleft it to the base. Part stood erect,  
Part fell into the deep. There Ajax sat,  
And felt the shock, and with the falling mass  
Was carried headlong to the billowy depths  
Below, and drank the brine and perished there. 655  
Thy brother in his roomy ships escaped  
The danger, for imperial Juno's aid  
Preserved him. But when near Meleia's heights  
About to land, a tempest seized and swept  
The hero thence across the fishy deep, 660  
Lamenting his hard lot, to that far cape  
Where once abode Thyestes, and where now  
His son Ægisthus dwelt. But when the gods  
Sent other winds, and safe at last appeared  
The voyage, they returned, and reached their  
home. 665

With joy he stepped upon his native soil,  
And kissed the earth that bore him, while his tears  
At that most welcome sight flowed fast and warm.  
Him from a lofty perch a spy beheld,

Whom treacherous Ægisthus planted there, 670  
Bribed by two golden talents. He had watched  
The whole year through, lest, coming unobserved,  
The king might make his prowess felt. The spy  
Flew to the royal palace with the news,  
And instantly Ægisthus planned a snare. 675  
He chose among the people twenty men,  
The bravest, whom he stationed out of sight,  
And gave command that others should prepare  
A banquet. Then with chariots and with steeds,  
And with a deadly purpose in his heart, 680  
He went, and, meeting Agamemnon, bade  
The shepherd of the people to the feast,  
And slew him at the board as men might slay  
A bullock at the crib. Of all who went  
With Agamemnon thither, none survived, 685  
And of the followers of Ægisthus none,  
But all were slaughtered in the banquet-hall.'

"He spake ; my heart was breaking, and I wept,  
While sitting on the sand, nor in my heart  
Cared I to live, or longer to behold 690  
The sweet light of the sun. But when there came  
Respite from tears and writhing on the ground,  
The Ancient of the Deep, who ne'er deceives,  
Spake yet again : ' Atrides, lose no time  
In tears ; they profit nothing. Rather seek 695  
The means by which thou mayst the soonest reach  
Thy native land. There thou perchance mayst find  
Ægisthus yet alive, or haply first

Orestes may have slain him, and thyself  
Arrive to see the funeral rites performed.' 700

“He spake, and though afflicted still, my heart  
Was somewhat comforted ; my spirit rose,  
And thus I answered him with winged words : —

“ ‘ These men I know ; name now the third, who  
still  
Is kept from his return afar within 705  
The mighty main, — alive, perchance, or dead ;  
For, though I dread to hear, I long to know.’

“I spake, and Proteus answered me again : —  
‘ It is Laertes’ son, whose dwelling stands  
In Ithaca. I saw him in an isle, 710  
And in the cavern-palace of the nymph  
Calypso, weeping bitterly, for she  
Constrains his stay. He cannot leave the isle  
For his own country ; ship arrayed with oars  
And seamen has he none to bear him o’er 715  
The breast of the great ocean. But for thee,  
’T is not decreed that thou shalt meet thy fate  
And die, most noble Menelaus, where  
The steeds of Argos in her pastures graze.  
The gods will send thee to the Elysian plain, 720  
And to the end of earth, the dwelling-place  
Of fair-haired Rhadamanthus. There do men  
Lead easiest lives. No snow, no bitter cold,  
No beating rains, are there ; the ocean-deeps  
With murmuring breezes from the West refresh 725  
The dwellers. Thither shalt thou go ; for thou

Art Helen's spouse, and son-in-law of Jove.'

“He spake, and plunged into the billowy deep.  
I to the fleet returned in company  
With my brave men, revolving, as I went, 730  
A thousand projects in my thought. I reached  
My galley by the sea, and we prepared  
Our evening meal. The hallowed night came down,  
And there upon the ocean-beach we slept.  
But when the rosy-fingered Morn appeared, 735  
The daughter of the Dawn, we drew our ships  
To the great deep, and raised the masts and spread  
The sails ; the crews, all entering, took their seats  
Upon the benches, ranged in order due,  
And beat the foaming water with their oars. 740  
Again to Egypt's coast I brought the fleet,  
And to the river that descends from Jove,  
And there I offered chosen hecatombs ;  
And having thus appeased the gods, I reared  
A tomb to Agamemnon, that his fame 745  
Might never die. When this was done I sailed  
For home ; the gods bestowed a favoring wind.  
But now remain thou till the eleventh day,  
Or till the twelfth, beneath my roof, and then  
Will I dismiss thee with munificent gifts, — 750  
Three steeds, a polished chariot, and a cup  
Of price, with which to pour, from day to day,  
Wine to the gods in memory of me.”

Then spake discreet Telemachus again : —

“Atrides, seek not to detain me long, 755



Though I could sit contentedly a year  
Beside thee, never longing for my home,  
Nor for my parents, such delight I find  
In listening to thy words ; but even now,  
In hallowed Pylos, my companions grow 760  
Weary, while thou delayest my return.  
The gifts, — whate'er thou choosest to bestow, --  
Let them be such as I can treasure up.  
The steeds to Ithaca I may not take,  
I leave them to adorn thy retinue ; 765  
For thou art ruler o'er a realm of plains,  
Where grows much lotos, and sweet grasses spring,  
And wheat and rye, and the luxuriant stalks  
Of the white barley. But in Ithaca  
Are no broad grounds for coursing, meadows  
none. 770

Goats graze amid its fields, a fairer land  
Than those where horses feed. No isle that lies  
Within the deep has either roads for steeds  
Or meadows, least of all has Ithaca."

He spake ; the valiant Menelaus smiled, 775  
And kindly touched him with his hand and said : —

"Dear son, thou comest of a generous stock ;  
Thy words declare it. I will change my gifts,  
As well I may. Of all that in my house  
Are treasured up, the choicest I will give, 780  
And the most precious. I will give a cup  
Wrought all of silver save its brim of gold.  
It is the work of Vulcan. Phædimus

The hero, King of Sidon, gave it me,  
 When I was coming home, and underneath 785  
 His roof was sheltered. Now it shall be thine."

So talked they with each other. Meantime came  
 Those who prepared the banquet to the halls  
 Of the great monarch. Bringing sheep they came  
 And strengthening wine. Their wives, who on their  
 brows 790

Wore showy fillets, brought the bread, and thus  
 Within the house of Menelaus all  
 Was bustle, setting forth the evening meal.

But in the well-paved court which lay before  
 The palace of Ulysses, where of late 795  
 Their insolence was shown, the suitor train  
 Amused themselves with casting quoits and spears,  
 While by themselves Antinoüs, and the youth  
 Of godlike mien, Eurymachus, who both  
 Were eminent above the others, sat. 800  
 To them Noëmon, son of Phronius, went,  
 Drew near, bespoke Antinoüs and inquired :—

"Is it among us known, or is it not,  
 Antinoüs, when Telemachus returns  
 From sandy Pylos? Thither he is gone 805  
 And in my galley, which I need to cross  
 To spacious Elis. There I have twelve mares  
 And hardy mule-colts with them yet untamed,  
 And some I must subdue to take the yoke."

He spake, and they were both amazed ; for they 810  
 Had never thought of him as visiting

Neleian Pylos, deeming that the youth  
Was somewhere in his fields, among the flocks,  
Or haply with the keeper of the swine.

Then did Antinoüs, Eupeithes' son, 815  
Make answer : " Tell me truly when he sailed,  
And what young men of Ithaca he chose  
To go with him. Were they his slaves, or hired  
To be his followers ? Tell, for I would know  
The whole. Took he thy ship against thy will ? 820  
Or didst thou yield it at his first request ? "

Noëmon, son of Phornius, thus replied : —  
" Most willingly I gave it, for what else  
Would any one have done when such a man  
Desired it in his need ? It would have been 825  
Hard to deny it. For the band of youths  
Who followed him, they are the bravest here  
Of all our people ; and I saw embark,  
As their commander, Mentor, or some god  
Like Mentor altogether. One thing moves 830  
My wonder. Only yesterday, at dawn,  
I met with Mentor here, whom I before  
Had seen embarking for the Pylian coast. "

Noëmon spake, and to his father's house  
Departed. Both were troubled at his words, 835  
And all the suitors took at once their seats,  
And ceased their pastimes. Then Antinoüs spake,  
Son of Eupeithes, greatly vexed ; his heart  
Was darkened with blind rage ; his eyes shot fire.

" Strange doings these ! a great and proud exploit

Performed, — this voyage of Telemachus, 841  
Which we had called impossible ! The boy,  
In spite of us, has had his will and gone,  
And carried off a ship, and for his crew  
Chosen the bravest of the people here. 845  
He yet will prove a pest. May Jupiter  
Crush him ere he can work us further harm !  
Now give me a swift bark and twenty men  
That I may lie in ambush and keep watch  
For his return within the straits between 850  
This isle and rugged Samos ; then, I deem,  
He will have sought his father to his cost.”

He spake ; they praised his words and bade him  
act,

And rose and left their places, entering  
The palace of Ulysses. Brief the time 855  
That passed before Penelope was warned  
Of what the suitors treacherously planned.  
The herald Medon told her all. He heard  
In the outer court their counsels while within  
They plotted, and he hastened through the house 860  
To bring the tidings to Penelope.

Penelope perceived him as he stepped  
Across the threshold, and bespake him thus :—

“ Why, herald, have the suitor princes sent  
Thee hither ? comest thou to bid the maids 865  
Of great Ulysses leave their tasks and make  
A banquet ready ? Would their wooing here  
And elsewhere were but ended, and this feast

Were their last feast on earth! Ye who in throngs  
Come hither and so wastefully consume 870  
The substance of the brave Telemachus,  
Have ye not from your parents, while ye yet  
Were children, heard how once Ulysses lived  
Among them, never wronging any man  
In all the realm by aught he did or said, — 875  
As mighty princes often do, through hate  
Of some and love of others? Never man  
Endured injustice at his hands, but you —  
Your vile designs and acts are known; ye bear  
No grateful memory of a good man's deeds." 880

And then, in turn, experienced Medon spake: —  
"O queen, I would this evil were the worst!  
The suitors meditate a greater still,  
And a more heinous far. May Jupiter  
Never permit the crime! Their purpose is 885  
To meet Telemachus, on his return,  
And slay him with the sword; for thou must know  
That on a voyage to the Pylia coast  
And noble Lacedæmon he has sailed,  
To gather tidings of his father's fate." 890

He spake, and her knees failed her and her heart  
Sank as she heard. Long time she could not speak;  
Her eyes were filled with tears, and her clear voice  
Was choked; yet, finding words at length, she  
said: —

"O herald! wherefore should my son have  
gone?" 895.

There was no need that he should trust himself  
To the swift ships, those horses of the sea,  
With which men traverse its unmeasured waste.  
Was it that he might leave no name on earth ? ”

And then again experienced Medon spake : — 900  
“ I know not whether prompted by some god  
Or moved by his own heart thy son has sailed  
For Pylos, hoping there to hear some news  
Of his returning father, or his fate.”

Thus having said, the herald, traversing 905  
The palace of Ulysses, went his way,  
While a keen anguish overpowered the queen,  
Nor could she longer bear to keep her place  
Upon her seat, — and many seats were there, —  
But on the threshold of her gorgeous rooms 910  
Lay piteously lamenting. Round her came  
Her maidens wailing, — all, both old and young,  
Who formed her household. These Penelope,  
Sobbing in her great sorrow, thus bespake : —

“ Hear me, my friends, the heavens have cast on  
me 915  
Griefs heavier than on any others born  
And reared with me, — me, who had lost by death  
Already a most gracious husband, one  
Who bore a lion heart and who was graced  
With every virtue, greatly eminent 920  
Among the Greeks, and widely famed abroad  
Through Hellas and all Argos. Now my son,  
He whom I loved, is driven before the storms

From home, inglorious, and I was not told  
Of his departure. Ye too, worthless crew ! 925  
Ye took no thought, not one of you, to call  
Me from my sleep, although ye must have known  
Full well when he embarked in his black ship.  
And if it had been told me that he planned  
This voyage, then, impatient as he was 930  
To sail, he would have certainly remained,  
Or else have left me in these halls a corpse.  
And now let one of my attendants call  
The aged Dolius, whom, when first I came  
To this abode, my father gave to me 935  
To be my servant, and who has in charge  
My orchards. Let him haste and take his place  
Beside Laertes, and to him declare  
All that has happened, that he may devise  
Some fitting remedy, or go among 940  
The people, to deplore the dark designs  
Of those who now are plotting to destroy  
The heir of great Ulysses and his own."

Then Eurycleia, the beloved nurse,  
Answered : " Dear lady, slay me with the sword, 945  
Or leave me here alive ; I will conceal  
Nothing that has been done or said. I gave  
All that he asked, both bread and delicate wine,  
And took a solemn oath, which he required,  
To tell thee naught of this till twelve days passed, 950  
Or till thou shouldst thyself inquire and hear  
Of his departure, that those lovely cheeks

Might not be stained with tears. Now bathe and put  
Fresh garments on, and to the upper rooms  
Ascending, with thy handmaids offer prayer 955  
To Pallas, daughter of the god who bears  
The ægis. She will then protect thy son,  
Even from death. Grieve not the aged man,  
Already much afflicted. Sure I am  
The lineage of Arcesius has not lost 960  
The favor of the gods, but some one yet  
Surviving will possess its lofty halls  
And its rich acres, stretching far away."

She spake; the queen repressed her grief, and held  
Her eyes from tears. She took the bath and put 965  
Fresh garments on, and, to the upper rooms  
Ascending with her maidens, heaped with cakes  
A canister, and prayed to Pallas thus:—

"Daughter invincible of Jupiter  
The Ægis-bearer, hear me. If within 970  
Thy courts the wise Ulysses ever burned  
Fat thighs of beeves or sheep, remember it,  
And rescue my dear son, and bring to naught  
The wicked plots of the proud suitor-crew."

She spake, and wept aloud. The goddess heard 975  
Her prayer. Meantime the suitors filled with noise  
The shadowy palace-halls, and there were some  
Among that throng of arrogant youths who said:—

"Truly the queen, whom we have wooed so long,  
Prepares for marriage; little does she know 980  
The bloody death we destine for her son."



So spake they, unaware of what was done  
Elsewhere. Antinoüs then stood forth and said :—

“ Good friends, I warn you all that ye refrain  
From boasts like these, lest some one should re-  
port 985

Your words within. Now let us silently  
Rise up, and all conspire to put in act  
The counsel all so heartily approve.”

He spake, and chose a crew of twenty men,  
The bravest. To the seaside and the ship 990  
They went, and down to the deep water drew  
The ship, and put the mast and sails on board,  
And fitted duly to their leathern rings  
The oars, and spread the white sail overhead.  
Their nimble-handed servants brought them arms, 995  
And there they moored the galley, went on board,  
And supped and waited for the evening star.

Now in the upper chamber the chaste queen,  
Penelope, lay fasting ; food or wine  
She had not tasted, and her thoughts were still 1000  
Fixed on her blameless son. Would he escape  
The threatened death, or perish by the hands  
Of the insolent suitors ? As a lion's thoughts,  
When, midst a crowd of men, he sees with dread  
The hostile circle slowly closing round, 1005  
Such were her thoughts, when balmy sleep at length  
Came creeping over her as on her couch  
She lay reclined, her limbs relaxed in rest.

Now Pallas framed a new device ; she called

A phantom up, in aspect like the dame 1010  
Iphthima, whom Eumelus had espoused  
In Phæræ, daughter of the high-souled chief  
Icarius. Her she sent into the halls  
Of great Ulysses, that she might beguile  
The sorrowful Penelope from tears 1015  
And lamentations. By the thong that held  
The bolt she slid into the royal bower  
And standing by her head bespoke the queen : —

“Penelope, afflicted as thou art,  
Art thou asleep? The ever-blessed gods 1020  
Permit thee not to grieve and weep ; thy son,  
Who has not sinned against them, shall return.”

And then discreet Penelope replied,  
Still sweetly slumbering at the Gate of Dreams : —

“Why, sister, art thou here, who ne’er before 1025  
Hast come to me? The home is far away  
In which thou dwellest. Thou exhortest me  
To cease from grieving, and to lay aside  
The painful thoughts that crowd into my mind,  
And torture me who have already lost 1030  
A noble-minded, lion-hearted spouse,  
One eminent among Achaia’s sons  
For every virtue, and whose fame was spread  
Through Hellas and through Argos. Now my son,  
My best beloved, goes to sea, — a boy, 1035  
Unused to hardships, and unskilled to deal  
With strangers. More I sorrow for his sake  
Than for his father’s. I am filled with fear,

And tremble lest he suffer wrong from those  
Among whom he has gone, or on the deep, 1040  
Where he has enemies who lie in wait  
To slay him ere he reach his home again."

And then the shadowy image spake again : —  
"Be of good courage ; let not fear o'ercome  
Thy spirit, for there goes with him a guide 1045  
Such as all others would desire to have  
Beside them ever, trusting in her power, —  
Pallas Athene, and she looks on thee  
With pity. From her presence I am sent,  
Her messenger, declaring this to thee." 1050

Again discreet Penelope replied : —  
"If then thou be a goddess and hast heard  
A goddess speak these words, declare, I pray,  
Of that ill-fated one, if yet he live  
And look upon the sun, or else have died 1055  
And passed to the abodes beneath the earth."

Once more the shadowy image spake : "Of him  
Will I say nothing, whether living yet  
Or dead ; no time is this for idle words."

She said, and from the chamber glided forth 1060  
Beside the bolt, and mingled with the winds.  
Then quickly from her couch of sleep arose  
The daughter of Icarius, for her heart  
Was glad, so plainly had the dream conveyed  
Its message in the stillness of the night. 1065

Meanwhile the suitors on their ocean-path  
Went in their galley, plotting cruelly

To slay Telemachus. A rocky isle  
Far in the middle sea, between the coast  
Of Ithaca and craggy Samos, lies, 1070  
Named Asteris ; of narrow bounds, yet there  
A sheltered haven is to which two straits  
Give entrance. There the Achaians lay in wait.

## BOOK V.

AURORA, rising from her couch beside  
The famed Tithonus, brought the light of day  
To men and to immortals. Then the gods  
Came to their seats in council. With them came  
High-thundering Jupiter, amongst them all 5  
The mightiest. Pallas, mindful of the past,  
Spake of Ulysses and his many woes,  
Grieved that he still was with the island nymph :—

“ O father Jove, and all ye blessed ones  
Who live forever ! let not sceptred king 10  
Henceforth be gracious, mild, and merciful  
And righteous ; rather be he deaf to prayer  
And prone to deeds of wrong, since no one now  
Remembers the divine Ulysses more  
Among the people over whom he ruled 15  
Benignly, like a father. Still he lies,  
Weighed down by many sorrows, in the isle  
And dwelling of Calypso, who so long

Constrains his stay. To his dear native land  
Depart he cannot ; ship arrayed with oars 20  
And seamen has he none, to bear him o'er  
The breast of the broad ocean. Nay, even now,  
Against his well-beloved son a plot  
Is laid, to slay him as he journeys home  
From Pylos the divine, and from the walls 25  
Of famous Sparta, whither he had gone  
To gather tidings of his father's fate."

Then answered her the Ruler of the storms :—  
" My child, what words are these that pass thy lips ?  
Was not thy long-determined counsel this, — 30  
That in good time Ulysses should return,  
To be avenged ? Guide, then, Telemachus  
Wisely, — for so thou canst, — that, all unharmed,  
He reach his native land, and, in their barks,  
Homeward the suitor-train retrace their way." 35

He spake, and turned to Hermes, his dear son :—  
" Hermes, — for thou in this my messenger  
Art, as in all things, — to the bright-haired nymph  
Make known my steadfast purpose, — the return  
Of suffering Ulysses. Neither gods 40  
Nor men shall guide his voyage. On a raft,  
Made firm with bands, he shall depart and reach,  
After long hardships, on the twentieth day,  
The fertile shore of Scheria, on whose isle  
Dwell the Phæacians, kinsmen of the gods. 45  
They like a god shall honor him, and thence  
Send him to his loved country in a ship,

With ample gifts of brass and gold, and store  
Of raiment, — wealth like which he ne'er had brought  
From conquered Ilion, had he reached his home 50  
Safely, with all his portion of the spoil.  
So is it preordained that he behold  
His friends again, and stand once more within  
His high-roofed palace, on his native soil."

He spake ; the herald Argicide obeyed, 55  
And hastily beneath his feet he bound  
The fair, ambrosial golden sandals, worn  
To bear him over ocean like the wind,  
And o'er the boundless land. His wand he took,  
Wherewith he softly seals the eyes of men, 60  
And opens them at will from sleep. With this  
In hand, the mighty Argus-queller flew,  
And, lighting on Pieria, from the sky  
Plunged downward to the deep, and skimmed its face  
Like hovering seamew, that on the broad gulfs 65  
Of the unfruitful ocean seeks her prey,  
And often dips her pinions in the brine ;  
So Hermes flew along the waste of waves.

But when he reached that island, far away,  
Forth from the dark-blue ocean-swell he stepped 70  
Upon the sea-beach, walking till he came  
To the vast cave in which the bright-haired nymph  
Made her abode. He found the nymph within ;  
A fire blazed brightly on the hearth, and far  
Was wafted o'er the isle the fragrant smoke 75  
Of cloven cedar, burning in the flame,

And cypress-wood. Meanwhile, in her recess,  
She sweetly sang, as busily she threw  
The golden shuttle through the web she wove.  
And all about the grotto alders gre, 80  
And poplars, and sweet-smelling cypresses.  
In a green forest, high among whose boughs  
Birds of broad wing, wood-owls, and falcons built  
Their nests, and crows, with voices sounding far,  
All haunting for their food the ocean-side. 85  
A vine, with downy leaves and clustering grapes,  
Crept over all the cavern rock. Four springs  
Poured forth their glittering waters in a row,  
And here and there went wandering side by side.  
Around were meadows of soft green, o'ergrown 90  
With violets and parsley. 'T was a spot  
Where even an immortal might awhile  
Linger, and gaze with wonder and delight.  
The herald Argus-queller stood, and saw,  
And marvelled ; but as soon as he had viewed 95  
The wonders of the place, he turned his steps,  
Entering the broad-roofed cave. Calypso there,  
The glorious goddess, saw him as he came,  
And knew him ; for the ever-living gods  
Are to each other known, though one may dwell 100  
Far from the rest. Ulysses, large of heart,  
Was not within. Apart, upon the shore,  
He sat and sorrowed, where he oft in tears  
And sighs and vain repinings passed the hours,  
Gazing with wet eyes on the barren deep. 105

Now, placing Hermes on a shining seat  
Of state, Calypso, glorious goddess, said :

“Thou of the golden wand, revered and loved,  
What, Hermes, brings thee hither? Passing few  
Have been thy visits. Make thy pleasure known. <sup>110</sup>  
My heart enjoins me to obey, if aught  
That thou commandest be within my power ;  
But first accept the offerings due a guest.”

The goddess, speaking thus, before him placed  
A table, where the heaped ambrosia lay, <sup>115</sup>  
And mingled the red nectar. Ate and drank  
The herald Argus-queller, and, refreshed,  
Answered the nymph, and made his message  
known : —

“ Art thou a goddess, and dost ask of me,  
A god, why came I hither? Yet, since thou <sup>120</sup>  
Requirest, I will truly tell the cause.  
I came unwillingly, at Jove’s command ;  
For who of choice would traverse the wide waste  
Of the salt ocean, with no city near  
Where men adore the gods with solemn rites <sup>125</sup>  
And chosen hecatombs. No god has power  
To elude or to resist the purposes  
Of ægis-bearing Jove. With thee abides,  
He bids me say, the most unhappy man  
Of all who round the city of Priam waged <sup>130</sup>  
The battle through nine years, and, in the tenth,  
Laying it waste, departed for their homes.  
But in their voyage they provoked the wrath



Of Pallas, who called up the furious winds  
And angry waves against them. By his side 135  
Sank all his gallant comrades in the deep.  
Him did the winds and waves drive hither. Him  
Jove bids thee send away with speed ; for here  
He must not perish, far from all he loves.  
So is it preordained that he behold 140  
His friends again, and stand once more within  
His high-roofed palace, on his native soil."

He spake ; Calypso, glorious goddess, heard,  
And shuddered, and with winged words replied :—

" Ye are unjust, ye gods, and, envious far 145  
Beyond all other beings, cannot bear  
That ever goddess openly should make  
A mortal man her consort. Thus it was  
When once Aurora, rosy-fingered, took  
Orion for her husband ; ye were stung, 150  
Amid your blissful lives, with envious hate,  
Till chaste Diana, of the golden throne,  
Smote him with silent arrows from her bow,  
And slew him in Ortygia. Thus, again,  
When bright-haired Ceres, swayed by her own heart,  
In fields which bore three yearly harvests, met 156  
Iäasion as a lover, this was known  
Erelong to Jupiter, who flung from high  
A flaming thunderbolt, and laid him dead.  
And now ye envy me, that with me dwells 160  
A mortal man. I saved him as he clung  
Alone upon his floating keel ; for Jove

Had cloven with a bolt of fire from heaven  
His galley in the midst of the black sea,  
And all his gallant comrades perished there. 165  
Him kindly I received ; I cherished him,  
And promised him a life that ne'er should know  
Decay or death. But since no god has power  
To elude or to withstand the purposes  
Of ægis-bearing Jove, let him depart — 170  
If so the sovereign moves him and commands —  
Over the barren deep. I send him not ;  
For neither ship arrayed with oars have I,  
Nor seamen, o'er the boundless waste of waves  
To bear him hence. My counsel I will give, 175  
And nothing will I hide that he should know,  
To place him safely on his native shore."

The herald Argus-queller answered her : —  
" Dismiss him thus, and bear in mind the wrath  
Of Jove, lest it be kindled against thee." 180

Thus having said, the mighty Argicide  
Departed ; and the nymph, who now had heard  
The doom of Jove, sought the great-hearted man,  
Ulysses. Him she found beside the deep,  
Seated alone, with eyes from which the tears 185  
Were never dried ; for now no more the nymph  
Delighted him ; he wasted his sweet life  
In yearning for his home. Night after night  
He slept constrained within the hollow cave,  
The unwilling by the fond ; and day by day 190  
He sat upon the rocks that edged the shore,

And in continual weeping and in sighs  
And vain repinings wore the hours away,  
Gazing through tears upon the barren deep.  
The glorious goddess stood by him and spake :— 195

“ Unhappy ! sit no longer sorrowing here,  
Nor waste life thus. Lo ! I most willingly  
Dismiss thee hence. Rise, hew down trees, and bind  
Their trunks with brazen clamps into a raft,  
And fasten planks above, a lofty floor, 200  
That it may bear thee o’er the dark-blue deep.  
Bread will I put on board, water, and wine, —  
Red wine, that cheers the heart, — and wrap thee  
well

In garments, and send after thee the wind,  
That safely thou attain thy native shore, 205  
If so the gods permit thee, who abide  
In the broad heaven above, and better know  
By far than I, and far more wisely judge.”

Ulysses, the great sufferer, as she spake  
Shuddered, and thus with winged words re-  
plied :— 210

“ Some other purpose than to send me home  
Is in thy heart, O goddess, bidding me  
To cross this frightful sea upon a raft, —  
This perilous sea, where never even ships  
Pass with their rapid keels, though Jove bestow 215  
The wind that glads the seaman. Nay, I climb  
No raft, against thy wish, unless thou swear  
The great oath of the gods that thou in this

Dost meditate no other harm to me."

He spake ; Calypso, glorious goddess, smiled, <sup>220</sup>  
And smoothed his forehead with her hand, and  
said : —

"Perverse, and slow to see where guile is not !  
How could thy heart permit thee thus to speak ?  
Now bear me witness, Earth, and ye broad Heavens  
Above us, and ye waters of the Styx <sup>225</sup>  
That flow beneath us, mightiest oath of all,  
And most revered by all the blessed gods,  
That I design no other harm to thee,  
But that I plan for thee, and counsel thee  
What I would do were I in need like thine. <sup>230</sup>  
I bear a juster mind ; my bosom holds  
A pitying heart, and not a heart of steel."

Thus having said, the glorious goddess moved  
Away with hasty steps, and where she trod  
He followed, till they reached the vaulted cave, — <sup>235</sup>  
The goddess and the hero. There he took  
The seat whence Hermes had just risen. The  
nymph

Brought forth whatever mortals eat and drink  
To set before him. She right opposite  
To that of great Ulysses took her seat. <sup>240</sup>  
Ambrosia there her maidens laid, and there  
Poured nectar. Both put forth their hands, and took  
The ready viands, till at length the calls  
Of hunger and of thirst were satisfied ;  
Calypso, glorious goddess, then began : — <sup>245</sup>

“ Son of Laertes, man of many wiles,  
High-born Ulysses! thus wilt thou depart  
Home to thy native country? Then farewell;  
But, couldst thou know the sufferings Fate ordains  
For thee ere yet thou landest on its shore, 250  
Thou wouldst remain to keep this home with me  
And be immortal, strong as is thy wish  
To see thy wife, — a wish that day by day  
Possesses thee. I cannot deem myself  
In face or form less beautiful than she; 255  
For never with immortals can the race  
Of mortal dames in form or face compare.”

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered her: —

“ Bear with me, gracious goddess; well I know  
All thou couldst say. The sage Penelope 260  
In feature and in stature comes not nigh  
To thee, for she is mortal, — deathless thou,  
And ever young; yet day by day I long  
To be at home once more, and pine to see  
The hour of my return. Even though some god 265  
Smite me on the black ocean, I shall bear  
The stroke, for in my bosom dwells a mind  
Patient of suffering; much have I endured,  
And much survived, in tempests on the deep,  
And in the battle; let this happen too.” 270

He spake; the sun went down; the night came  
on;

And now the twain withdrew to a recess  
Deep in the vaulted cave, where, side by side,

They took their rest. But when the child of Dawn,  
Aurora, rosy-fingered, looked abroad, 275  
Ulysses put his vest and mantle on ;  
The nymph too, in a robe of silver-white,  
Ample, and delicate, and beautiful,  
Arrayed herself, and round about her loins  
Wound a fair golden girdle, drew a veil 280  
Over her head, and planned to send away  
Magnanimous Ulysses. She bestowed  
A heavy axe, of steel and double-edged,  
Well fitted to the hand, the handle wrought  
Of olive-wood, firm set and beautiful. 285  
A polished adze she gave him next, and led  
The way to a far corner of the isle,  
Where lofty trees, alders and poplars, stood,  
And firs that reached the clouds, sapless and dry  
Long since, and fitter thus to ride the waves. 290  
Then, having shown where grew the tallest trees,  
Calypso, glorious goddess, sought her home.

Trees then he felled, and soon the task was done.  
Twenty in all he brought to earth, and squared  
Their trunks with the sharp steel, and carefully 295  
He smoothed their sides, and wrought them by a line.  
Calypso, gracious goddess, having brought  
Wimbles, he bored the beams, and, fitting them  
Together, made them fast with nails and clamps.  
As when some builder, skilful in his art, 300  
Frames for a ship of burden the broad keel,  
Such ample breadth Ulysses gave the raft.

Upon the massy beams he reared a deck,  
And floored it with long planks from end to end.  
On this a mast he raised, and to the mast 305  
Fitted a yard ; he shaped a rudder next,  
To guide the raft along her course, and round  
With woven work of willow-boughs he fenced  
Her sides against the dashings of the sea.  
Calypso, gracious goddess, brought him store 310  
Of canvas, which he fitly shaped to sails,  
And, rigging her with cords and ropes and stays,  
Heaved her with levers into the great deep.

'T was the fourth day. His labors now were done,  
And on the fifth the goddess from her isle 315  
Dismissed him, newly from the bath, arrayed  
In garments given by her, that shed perfumes.  
A skin of dark red wine she put on board,  
A larger one of water, and for food  
A basket, stored with viands such as please 320  
The appetite. A friendly wind and soft  
She sent before. The great Ulysses spread  
His canvas joyfully to catch the breeze,  
And sat and guided with nice care the helm,  
Gazing with fixed eye on the Pleiades, 325  
Boötes setting late, and the Great Bear,  
By others called the Wain, which, wheeling round,  
Looks ever toward Orion, and alone  
Dips not into the waters of the deep.  
For so Calypso, glorious goddess, bade 330  
That on his ocean journey he should keep

That constellation ever on his left.  
Now seventeen days were in the voyage past,  
And on the eighteenth shadowy heights appeared,  
The nearest point of the Phæacian land, 335  
Lying on the dark ocean like a shield.

But mighty Neptune, coming from among  
The Ethiopians, saw him. Far away  
He saw, from mountain-heights of Solyma,  
The voyager, and burned with fiercer wrath, 340  
And shook his head, and said within himself:—

“Strange! now I see the gods have new designs  
For this Ulysses, formed while I was yet  
In Ethiopia. He draws near the land  
Of the Phæacians, where it is decreed 345  
He shall o’erpass the boundary of his woes;  
But first, I think, he will have much to bear.”

He spake, and round about him called the clouds  
And roused the ocean, — wielding in his hand  
The trident, — summoned all the hurricanes 350  
Of all the winds, and covered earth and sky  
At once with mists, while from above the night  
Fell suddenly. The east wind and the south  
Pushed forth at once, with the strong-blowing west,  
And the clear north rolled up his mighty waves. 355  
Ulysses trembled in his knees and heart,  
And thus to his great soul, lamenting, said:—

“What will become of me? unhappy man!  
I fear that all the goddess said was true,  
Foretelling what disasters should o’ertake 360



My voyage ere I reach my native land.  
Now are her words fulfilled. How Jupiter  
Wraps the great heaven in clouds and stirs the deep  
To tumult ! Wilder grow the hurricanes  
Of all the winds, and now my fate is sure. 365  
Thrice happy, four times happy, they who fell  
On Troy's wide field, warring for Atreus' sons :  
O, had I met my fate and perished there,  
That very day on which the Trojan host,  
Around the dead Achilles, hurled at me 370  
Their brazen javelins, I had then received  
Due burial, and great glory with the Greeks ;  
Now must I die a miserable death."

As thus he spake, upon him, from on high,  
A huge and frightful billow broke ; it whirled 375  
The raft around, and far from it he fell.  
His hands let go the rudder ; a fierce rush  
Of all the winds together snapped in twain  
The mast ; far off the yard and canvas flew  
Into the deep ; the billow held him long 380  
Beneath the waters, and he strove in vain  
Quickly to rise to air from that huge swell  
Of ocean, for the garments weighed him down  
Which fair Calypso gave him. But at length  
Emerging, he rejected from his throat 385  
The bitter brine that down his forehead streamed.  
Even then, though hopeless with dismay, his thought  
Was on the raft ; and, struggling through the waves,  
He seized it, sprang on board, and, seated there,

Escaped the threatened death. Still to and fro 390  
The rolling billows drave it. As the wind  
In autumn sweeps the thistles o'er the field,  
Clinging together, so the blasts of heaven  
Hither and thither drove it o'er the sea.  
And now the south wind flung it to the north 395  
To buffet ; now the east wind to the west.

Ino Leucothea saw him clinging there, —  
The delicate-footed child of Cadmus, once  
A mortal, speaking with a mortal voice,  
Though now within the ocean gulfs she shares 400  
The honors of the gods. With pity she  
Beheld Ulysses struggling thus distressed,  
And, rising from the abyss below, in form  
A cormorant, the sea-nymph took her perch  
On the well-banded raft, and thus she said : — 405

“ Ah, luckless man ! how hast thou angered thus  
Earth-shaking Neptune, that he visits thee  
With these disasters ? Yet he cannot take,  
Although he seek it earnestly, thy life.  
Now do my bidding, for thou seemest wise. 410  
Laying aside thy garments, let the raft  
Drift with the winds, while thou, by strength of arm,  
Makest thy way in swimming to the land  
Of the Phæacians, where thy safety lies.  
Receive this veil, and bind its heavenly woof 415  
Beneath thy breast, and have no further fear  
Of hardship or of danger. But, as soon  
As thou shalt touch the island, take it off,

And turn away thy face, and fling it far  
From where thou standest into the black deep.” 420

The goddess gave the veil as thus she spoke,  
And to the tossing deep went down, in form  
A cormorant ; the black wave covered her.  
But still Ulysses, mighty sufferer,  
Pondered, and thus to his great soul he said :— 425

“ Ah me ! perhaps some god is planning here  
Some other fraud against me, bidding me  
Forsake my raft. I will not yet obey,  
For still far off I see the land in which  
'T is said my refuge lies. This will I do, 430  
For this seems wisest. While the fastenings last  
That hold these timbers, I will keep my place  
And bide the tempest here ; but when the waves  
Shall dash my raft in pieces, I will swim,  
For nothing better will remain to do.” 435

As he revolved this purpose in his mind,  
Earth-shaking Neptune sent a mighty wave,  
Horrid and huge and high, and where he sat  
It smote him. As a violent wind uplifts  
The dry chaff heaped upon a threshing-floor, 440  
And sends it scattered through the air abroad,  
So did that wave fling loose the ponderous beams.  
To one of these, Ulysses, clinging fast,  
Bestrode it, like a horseman on his steed ;  
And now he took the garments off, bestowed 445  
By fair Calypso, binding round his breast  
The veil, and forward plunged into the deep,

With palms outspread, prepared to swim. Mean-  
while

Neptune beheld him, — Neptune, mighty king, —  
And shook his head, and said within himself : — 450

“Go thus, and laden with mischances roam  
The waters till thou come among the race  
Cherished by Jupiter, but well I deem  
Thou wilt not find thy share of suffering light.”

Thus having said he urged his coursers on, 455  
With their fair-flowing manes, until he came  
To Ægæ, where his glorious palace stands.

But Pallas, child of Jove, had other thoughts.  
She stayed the course of every wind beside,  
And bade them rest, and lulled them into sleep, 460  
But summoned the swift north to break the waves,  
That so Ulysses, the high-born, escaped  
From death and from the fates, might be the guest  
Of the Phæacians, — men who love the sea.  
Two days and nights among the mighty waves 465  
He floated, oft his heart foreboding death.  
But when the bright-haired Eos had fulfilled  
The third day's course, and all the winds were laid,  
And calm was on the watery waste, he saw  
That land was near, as, lifted on the crest 470  
Of a huge swell, he looked with sharpened sight ;  
And as a father's life preserved makes glad  
His children's hearts, when long time he has lain  
Sick, wrung with pain, and wasting by the power  
Of some malignant genius, till at length 475

The gracious gods bestow a welcome cure,  
So welcome to Ulysses was the sight  
Of woods and fields. By swimming on he thought  
To climb and tread the shore ; but when he drew  
So near that one who shouted could be heard 485  
From land, the sound of ocean on the rocks  
Came to his ear, — for there huge breakers roared  
And spouted fearfully, and all around  
Was covered with the sea-foam. Haven here  
Was none for ships, nor sheltering creek, but  
shores 485

Beetling from high, and crags and walls of rock.  
Ulysses trembled both in knees and heart,  
And thus to his great soul, lamenting, said : —

“ Now woe is me ! as soon as Jove has shown  
What I had little hoped to see, the land, 490  
And I through all these waves have ploughed my way,  
I find no issue from the hoary deep.  
For sharp rocks border it, and all around  
Roar the wild surges ; slippery cliffs arise  
Close to deep gulfs, and footing there is none 495  
Where I might plant my steps and thus escape.  
All effort now were fruitless to resist  
The mighty billow hurrying me away  
To dash me on the pointed rocks. If yet  
I strive, by swimming further, to descry 500  
Some sloping shore or harbor of the isle,  
I fear the tempest, lest it hurl me back,  
Heavily groaning, to the fishy deep ;

Or huge sea-monster, from the multitude  
Which sovereign Amphitritè feeds, be sent 505  
Against me by some god, — for well I know  
The power who shakes the shores is wroth with me.”

While he revolved these doubts within his mind,  
A huge wave hurled him toward the rugged coast.  
Then had his limbs been flayed, and all his bones 510  
Broken at once, had not the blue-eyed maid,  
Minerva, prompted him. Borne toward the rock,  
He clutched it instantly with both his hands,  
And panting clung till that huge wave rolled by,  
And so escaped its fury. Back it came, 515  
And smote him once again, and flung him far  
Seaward. As to the claws of Polypus,  
Plucked from its bed, the pebbles thickly cling,  
So flakes of skin, from off his powerful hands,  
Were left upon the rock. The mighty surge 520  
O'erwhelmed him; he had perished ere his time, —  
Hapless Ulysses ! — but the blue-eyed maid,  
Pallas, informed his mind with forecast. Straight  
Emerging from the wave that shoreward rolled,  
He swam along the coast and eyed it well, 525  
In hope of sloping beach or sheltered creek.  
But when, in swimming, he had reached the mouth  
Of a soft-flowing river, here appeared  
The spot he wished for, smooth, without a rock,  
And here was shelter from the wind. He felt 530  
The current's flow, and thus devoutly prayed : —

“ Hear me, O sovereign power, whoe'er thou art !

To thee, the long-desired, I come. I seek  
Escape from Neptune's threatenings on the sea.  
The deathless gods respect the prayer of him 535  
Who looks to them for help, a fugitive,  
As I am now, when to thy stream I come,  
And to thy knees, from many a hardship past.  
O thou that here art ruler, I declare  
Myself thy suppliant ; be thou merciful." 540

He spoke ; the river stayed his current, checked  
The billows, smoothed them to a calm, and gave  
The swimmer a safe landing at his mouth.  
Then dropped his knees and sinewy arms at once,  
Unstrung, for faint with struggling was his heart. 545  
His body was all swoln ; the brine gushed forth  
From mouth and nostrils ; all unnerved he lay,  
Breathless and speechless ; utter weariness  
O'ermastered him. But when he breathed again,  
And his flown senses had returned, he loosed 550  
The veil that Ino gave him from his breast,  
And to the salt flood cast it. A great wave  
Bore it far down the stream ; the goddess there  
In her own hands received it. He, meanwhile,  
Withdrawing from the brink, lay down among 555  
The reeds, and kissed the harvest-bearing earth,  
And thus to his great soul, lamenting, said :—

“ Ah me ! what must I suffer more ? what yet  
Will happen to me ? If by the river's side  
I pass the unfriendly watches of the night, 560  
The cruel cold and dews that steep the bank

May, in this weakness, end me utterly,  
For chilly blows this river-air at dawn ;  
But should I climb this hill, to sleep within  
The shadowy wood, among thick shrubs, if cold 565  
And weariness allow me, then I fear,  
That, while the pleasant slumbers o'er me steal,  
I may become the prey of savage beasts."

Yet, as he longer pondered, this seemed best.  
He rose, and sought the wood, and found it near 570  
The water, on a height, o'erlooking far  
The region round. Between two shrubs that sprang  
Both from one spot he entered, — olive-trees,  
One wild, one fruitful. The damp-blowing wind  
Ne'er pierced their covert ; never blazing sun 575  
Darted his beams within, nor pelting shower  
Beat through, so closely intertwined they grew.  
Here entering, Ulysses heaped a bed  
Of leaves with his own hands ; he made it broad  
And high, for thick the leaves had fallen around. 580  
Two men and three, in that abundant store,  
Might bide the winter storm, though keen the cold.  
Ulysses, the great sufferer, on his couch  
Looked and rejoiced, and placed himself within,  
And heaped the leaves high o'er him and around, 585  
As one who, dwelling in the distant fields,  
Without a neighbor near him, hides a brand  
In the dark ashes, keeping carefully  
The seeds of fire alive, lest he, perforce,  
To light his hearth must bring them from afar ; 590



So did Ulysses in that pile of leaves  
 Bury himself, while Pallas o'er his eyes  
 Poured sleep, and closed his lids, that he might take,  
 After his painful toils, the fitting rest.

## BOOK VI.

THUS overcome with toil and weariness,  
 The noble sufferer Ulysses slept,  
 While Pallas hastened to the realm and town  
 Peopled by the Phæacians, who of yore  
 Abode in spacious Hypereia, near 5  
 The insolent race of Cyclops, and endured  
 Wrong from their mightier hands. A godlike chief,  
 Nausithoüs, led them to a new abode,  
 And planted them in Scheria, far away  
 From plotting neighbors. With a wall he fenced 10  
 Their city, built them dwellings there, and reared  
 Fanes to the gods, and changed the plain to fields.  
 But he had bowed to death, and had gone down  
 To Hades, and Alcinoüs, whom the gods  
 Endowed with wisdom, governed in his stead. 15  
 Now to his palace, planning the return  
 Of the magnanimous Ulysses, came  
 The blue-eyed goddess Pallas, entering  
 The gorgeous chamber where a damsel slept, —  
 Nausicaä, daughter of the large-souled king 20

Alcinoüs, beautiful in form and face  
As one of the immortals. Near her lay,  
And by the portal, one on either side,  
Fair as the Graces, two attendant maids.  
The shining doors were shut. But Pallas came 25  
As comes a breath of air, and stood beside  
The damsel's head and spake. In look she seemed  
The daughter of the famous mariner  
Dymas, a maiden whom Nausicaä loved,  
The playmate of her girlhood. In her shape 30  
The blue-eyed goddess stood, and thus she said :—  
“Nausicaä, has thy mother then brought forth  
A careless housewife? Thy magnificent robes  
Lie still neglected, though thy marriage day  
Is near, when thou art to array thyself 35  
In seemly garments, and bestow the like  
On those who lead thee to the bridal rite ;  
For thus the praise of men is won, and thus  
Thy father and thy gracious mother both  
Will be rejoiced. Now with the early dawn 40  
Let us all hasten to the washing-place.  
I too would go with thee, and help thee there,  
That thou mayst sooner end the task, for thou  
Not long wilt be unwedded. Thou art wooed  
Already by the noblest of the race 45  
Of the Phæacians, for thy birth, like theirs,  
Is of the noblest. Make thy suit at morn  
To thy illustrious father, that he bid  
His mules and car be harnessed to convey

Thy girdles, robes, and mantles marvellous 50  
In beauty. That were seemlier than to walk,  
Since distant from the town the lavers lie."

Thus having said, the blue-eyed Pallas went  
Back to Olympus, where the gods have made,  
So saith tradition, their eternal seat. 55

The tempest shakes it not, nor is it drenched  
By showers, and there the snow doth never fall.  
The calm clear ether is without a cloud ;  
And in the golden light, that lies on all,  
Days after day the blessed gods rejoice. 60  
Thither the blue-eyed goddess, having given  
Her message to the sleeping maid, withdrew.

Soon the bright morning came. Nausicaä rose,  
Clad royally, as marvelling at her dream  
She hastened through the palace to declare 65  
Her purpose to her father and the queen.  
She found them both within. Her mother sat  
Beside the hearth with her attendant maids,  
And turned the distaff loaded with a fleece  
Dyed in sea-purple. On the threshold stood 70  
Her father, going forth to meet the chiefs  
Of the Phæacians in a council where  
Their noblest asked his presence. Then the maid,  
Approaching her beloved father, spake : —

"I pray, dear father, give command to make 75  
A chariot ready for me, with high sides  
And sturdy wheels, to bear to the river-brink,  
There to be cleansed, the costly robes that now

Lie soiled. Thee likewise it doth well beseem  
At councils to appear in vestments fresh 80  
And stainless. Thou hast also in these halls  
Five sons, two wedded, three in boyhood's bloom,  
And ever in the dance they need attire  
New from the wash. All this must I provide."

She ended, for she shrank from saying aught 85  
Of her own hopeful marriage. He perceived  
Her thought and said : " Mules I deny thee not,  
My daughter, nor aught else. Go then ; my grooms  
Shall make a carriage ready with high sides  
And sturdy wheels, and a broad rack above." 90

He spake, and gave command. The grooms  
obeyed,  
And, making ready in the outer court  
The strong-wheeled chariot, led the harnessed mules  
Under the yoke and made them fast ; and then  
Appeared the maiden, bringing from her bower 95  
The shining garments. In the polished car  
She piled them, while with many pleasant meats  
And flavoring morsels for the day's repast  
Her mother filled a hamper, and poured wine  
Into a goatskin. As her daughter climbed 100  
The car, she gave into her hands a cruse  
Of gold with smooth anointing oil for her  
And her attendant maids. Nausicaä took  
The scourge and showy reins, and struck the mules  
To urge them onward. Onward with loud noise 105  
They went, and with a speed that slackened not,

And bore the robes and her, — yet not alone,  
For with her went the maidens of her train.  
Now when they reached the river's pleasant brink,  
Where lavers had been hollowed out to last 110  
Perpetually, and freely through them flowed  
Pure water that might cleanse the foulest stains,  
They loosed the mules, and drove them from the wain  
To browse the sweet grass by the eddying stream ;  
And took the garments out, and flung them down 115  
In the dark water, and with hasty feet  
Trampled them there in frolic rivalry.  
And when the task was done, and all the stains  
Were cleansed away, they spread the garments out  
Along the beach and where the stream had washed 120  
The gravel cleanest. Then they bathed, and gave  
Their limbs the delicate oil, and took their meal  
Upon the river's border, — while the robes  
Beneath the sun's warm rays were growing dry.  
And now, when they were all refreshed by food, 125  
Mistress and maidens laid their veils aside  
And played at ball. Nausicaä the white-armed  
Began a song. As when the archer-queen  
Diana, going forth among the hills, —  
The sides of high Taygetus or slopes 130  
Of Erymanthus, — chases joyously  
Boars and fleet stags, and round her in a throng  
Frolic the rural nymphs, Latona's heart  
Is glad, for over all the rest are seen  
Her daughter's head and brow, and she at once 135

Is known among them, though they all are fair,  
Such was this spotless virgin midst her maids.

Now when they were about to move for home  
With harnessed mules and with the shining robes  
Carefully folded, then the blue-eyed maid, 140  
Pallas, bethought herself of this, — to rouse  
Ulysses and to bring him to behold  
The bright-eyed maiden, that she might direct  
The stranger's way to the Phæacian town.  
The royal damsel at a handmaid cast 145  
The ball; it missed, and fell into the stream  
Where a deep eddy whirled. All shrieked aloud.  
The great Ulysses started from his sleep  
And sat upright, discoursing to himself: —

“ Ah me ! upon what region am I thrown? 150  
What men are here, — wild, savage, and unjust,  
Or hospitable, and who hold the gods  
In reverence? There are voices in the air,  
Womanly voices, as of nymphs that haunt  
The mountain summits, and the river-founts, 155  
And the moist grassy meadows. Or perchance  
Am I near men who have the power of speech?  
Nay, let me then go forth at once and learn.”

Thus having said, the great Ulysses left  
The thicket. From the close-grown wood he rent, 160  
With his strong hand, a branch well set with leaves,  
And wound it as a covering round his waist.  
Then like a mountain lion he went forth,  
That walks abroad, confiding in his strength,

In rain and wind ; his eyes shoot fire ; he falls 165  
On oxen, or on sheep, or forest-deer,  
For hunger prompts him even to attack  
The flock within its closely guarded fold.  
Such seemed Ulysses when about to meet  
Those fair-haired maidens, naked as he was, 170  
But forced by strong necessity. To them  
His look was frightful, for his limbs were foul  
With sea-foam yet. To right and left they fled  
Along the jutting river-banks. Alone  
The daughter of Alcinoüs kept her place, 175  
For Pallas gave her courage and forbade  
Her limbs to tremble. So she waited there.  
Ulysses pondered whether to approach  
The bright-eyed damsel and embrace her knees  
And supplicate, or, keeping yet aloof, 180  
Pray her with soothing words to show the way  
Townward and give him garments. Musing thus,  
It seemed the best to keep at distance still,  
And use soft words, lest, should he clasp her knees,  
The maid might be displeased. With gentle words 185  
Skilfully ordered thus Ulysses spake : —

“ O queen, I am thy suppliant, whether thou  
Be mortal or a goddess. If perchance  
Thou art of that immortal race who dwell  
In the broad heaven, thou art, I deem, most like 190  
To Dian, daughter of imperial Jove,  
In shape, in stature, and in noble air.  
If mortal and a dweller of the earth,

Thrice happy are thy father and his queen,  
Thrice happy are thy brothers ; and their hearts 195  
Must overflow with gladness for thy sake,  
Beholding such a scion of their house  
Enter the choral dance. But happiest he  
Beyond them all, who, bringing princely gifts,  
Shall bear thee to his home a bride ; for sure 200  
I never looked on one of mortal race,  
Woman or man, like thee, and as I gaze  
I wonder. Like to thee I saw of late,  
In Delos, a young palm-tree growing up  
Beside Apollo's altar ; for I sailed 205  
To Delos, with much people following me,  
On a disastrous voyage. Long I gazed  
Upon it wonder-struck, as I am now, —  
For never from the earth so fair a tree  
Had sprung. So marvel I, and am amazed 210  
At thee, O lady, and in awe forbear  
To clasp thy knees. Yet much have I endured.  
It was but yestereve that I escaped  
From the black sea, upon the twentieth day,  
So long the billows and the rushing gales 215  
Farther and farther from Ogygia's isle  
Had borne me. Now upon this shore some god  
Casts me, perchance to meet new sufferings here ;  
For yet the end is not, and many things  
The gods must first accomplish. But do thou, 220  
O queen, have pity on me, since to thee  
I come the first of all. I do not know



A single dweller of the land beside.  
 Show me, I pray, thy city ; and bestow  
 Some poor old robe to wrap me, — if, indeed, 225  
 In coming hither, thou hast brought with thee  
 Aught poor or coarse. And may the gods vouchsafe  
 To thee whatever blessing thou canst wish,  
 Husband and home and wedded harmony.  
 There is no better, no more blessed state, 230  
 Than when the wife and husband in accord  
 Order their household lovingly. Then those  
 Repine who hate them, those who wish them well  
 Rejoice, and they themselves the most of all.”

And then the white-armed maid Nausicaä  
 said : — 235

“ Since then, O stranger, thou art not malign  
 Of purpose nor weak-minded, — yet, in truth,  
 Olympian Jupiter bestows the goods  
 Of fortune on the noble and the base  
 To each one at his pleasure ; and thy griefs 240  
 Are doubtless sent by him, and it is fit  
 That thou submit in patience, — now that thou  
 Hast reached our lands, and art within our realm,  
 Thou shalt not lack for garments nor for aught  
 Due to a suppliant stranger in his need. 245  
 The city I will show thee, and will name  
 Its dwellers, — the Phæacians, — they possess  
 The city ; all the region lying round  
 Is theirs, and I am daughter of the prince  
 Alcinoüs, large of soul, to whom are given 250

The rule of the Phæacians and their power.”

So spake the damsel, and commanded thus  
Her fair-haired maids : “ Stay ! whither do ye flee,  
My handmaids, when a man appears in sight ?  
Ye think, perhaps, he is some enemy. 255  
Nay, there is no man living now, nor yet  
Will live, to enter, bringing war, the land  
Of the Phæacians. Very dear are they  
To the great gods. We dwell apart, afar  
Within the unmeasured deep, amid its waves 260  
The most remote of men ; no other race  
Hath commerce with us. This man comes to us  
A wanderer and unhappy, and to him  
Our cares are due. The stranger and the poor  
Are sent by Jove, and slight regards to them 265  
Are grateful. Maidens, give the stranger food  
And drink, and take him to the river-side  
To bathe where there is shelter from the wind.”

So spake the mistress ; and they stayed their flight  
And bade each other stand, and led the chief 270  
Under a shelter as the royal maid,  
Daughter of stout Alcinoüs, gave command,  
And laid a cloak and tunic near the spot  
To be his raiment, and a golden cruse  
Of limpid oil. Then, as they bade him bathe 275  
In the fresh stream, the noble chieftain said :—

“ Withdraw, ye maidens, hence, while I prepare  
To cleanse my shoulders from the bitter brine,  
And to anoint them ; long have these my limbs

Been unrefreshed by oil. I will not bathe 280  
Before you. I should be ashamed to stand  
Unclothed in presence of these bright-haired maids."

He spake ; they hearkened and withdrew, and told  
The damsel what he said. Ulysses then  
Washed the salt spray of ocean from his back 285  
And his broad shoulders in the flowing stream,  
And wiped away the sea-froth from his brows.  
And when the bath was over, and his limbs  
Had been anointed, and he had put on  
The garments sent him by the spotless maid, 290  
Jove's daughter, Pallas, caused him to appear  
Of statelier size and more majestic mien,  
And bade the locks that crowned his head flow down,  
Curling like blossoms of the hyacinth.

As when some skilful workman trained and taught 295  
By Vulcan and Minerva in his art  
Binds the bright silver with a verge of gold,  
And graceful is his handiwork, such grace  
Did Pallas shed upon the hero's brow  
And shoulders, as he passed along the beach, 300  
And, glorious in his beauty and the pride  
Of noble bearing, sat aloof. The maid  
Admired, and to her bright-haired women spake : —

" Listen to me, my maidens, while I speak.  
This man comes not among the godlike sons 305  
Of the Phæacian stock against the will  
Of all the gods of heaven. I thought him late  
Of an unseemly aspect ; now he bears

A likeness to the immortal ones whose home  
Is the broad heaven. I would that I might call 310  
A man like him my husband, dwelling here,  
And here content to dwell. Now hasten, maids,  
And set before the stranger food and wine."

She spake ; they heard and cheerfully obeyed,  
And set before Ulysses food and wine. 315  
The patient chief Ulysses ate and drank  
Full eagerly, for he had fasted long.

White-armed Nausicaä then had other cares.  
She placed the smoothly folded robes within  
The sumptuous chariot, yoked the firm-hoofed  
mules, 320

And mounted to her place, and from the seat  
Spake kindly, counselling Ulysses thus : —

" Now, stranger, rise and follow to the town,  
And to my royal father's palace I  
Will be thy guide, where, doubt not, thou wilt  
meet 325

The noblest men of our Phæacian race.  
But do as I advise, — for not inapt  
I deem thee. While we traverse yet the fields  
Among the tilth, keep thou among my train  
Of maidens, following fast behind the mules 330  
And chariot. I will lead thee in the way.  
But when our train goes upward toward the town,  
Fenced with its towery wall, and on each side  
Embraced by a fair haven, with a strait  
Of narrow entrance, where our well-oared barks 335

Have each a mooring-place along the road,  
And there round Neptune's glorious fane extends  
A market-place, surrounded by huge stones,  
Dragged from the quarry hither, where is kept  
The rigging of the barks, — sail-cloth and ropes,— 340  
And oars are polished there, — for little reck  
Phæacians of the quiver and the bow,  
And give most heed to masts and shrouds and ships  
Well poised, in which it is their pride to cross  
The foamy deep, — when there I would not bring 345  
Rude taunts upon myself, for in the crowd  
Are brutal men. One of the baser sort  
Perchance might say, on meeting us : ' What man,  
Handsome and lusty-limbed, is he who thus  
Follows Nausicaä? where was it her luck 350  
To find him? will he be her husband yet?  
Perhaps she brings some wanderer from his ship,  
A stranger from strange lands, for we have here  
No neighbors ; or, perhaps, it is a god  
Called down by fervent prayer from heaven to  
dwell 355  
Henceforth with her. 'T is well if she have found  
A husband elsewhere, since at home she meets  
Her many noble wooers with disdain ;  
They are Phæacians.' Thus the crowd would say,  
And it would bring reproach upon my name. 360  
I too would blame another who should do  
The like, and, while her parents were alive,  
Without their knowledge should consort with men

Before her marriage. Stranger, now observe  
My words, and thou shalt speedily obtain 365  
Safe-conduct from my father, and be sent  
Upon thy voyage homeward. We shall reach  
A beautiful grove of poplars by the way,  
Sacred to Pallas ; from it flows a brook,  
And round it lies a meadow. In this spot 370  
My father has his country-grounds, and here  
His garden flourishes, as far from town  
As one could hear a shout. There sit thou down  
And wait till we are in the city's streets  
And at my father's house. When it shall seem 375  
That we are there, arise and onward fare  
To the Phæacian city, and inquire  
Where dwells Alcinoüs the large-souled king,  
My father ; 't is not hard to find ; a child  
Might lead thee thither. Of the houses reared 380  
By the Phæacians there is none like that  
In which Alcinoüs the hero dwells.  
When thou art once within the court and hall,  
Go quickly through the palace till thou find  
My mother where she sits beside the hearth, 385  
Leaning against a column in its blaze,  
And twisting threads, a marvel to behold,  
Of bright sea-purple, while her maidens sit  
Behind her. Near her is my father's throne,  
On which he sits at feasts, and drinks the wine 390  
Like one of the immortals. Pass it by  
And clasp my mother's knees ; so mayst thou see

Soon and with joy the day of thy return,  
Although thy home be far. For if her mood  
Be kindly toward thee, thou mayst hope to greet <sup>395</sup>  
Thy friends once more, and enter yet again  
Thy own fair palace in thy native land."

Thus having said, she raised the shining scourge  
And struck the mules, that quickly left behind  
The river. On they went with easy pace <sup>400</sup>  
And even steps. The damsel wielded well  
The reins, and used the lash with gentle hand,  
So that Ulysses and her train of maids  
On foot could follow close. And now the sun  
Was sinking when they came to that fair grove <sup>405</sup>  
Sacred to Pallas. There the noble chief  
Ulysses sat him down, and instantly  
Prayed to the daughter of imperial Jove :—

"O thou unconquerable child of Jove  
The Ægis-bearer ! hearken to me now, <sup>410</sup>  
Since late thou wouldst not listen to my prayer,  
What time the mighty shaker of the shores  
Pursued and wrecked me ! Grant me to receive  
Pity and kindness from Phæacia's sons."

So prayed he, supplicating. Pallas heard <sup>415</sup>  
The prayer, but came not to him openly.  
Awe of her father's brother held her back ;  
For he would still pursue with violent hate  
Ulysses, till he reached his native land.

## BOOK VII.

SO prayed Ulysses the great sufferer.  
The strong mules bore the damsel toward the  
town,

And when she reached her father's stately halls  
She stopped beneath the porch. Her brothers  
came

Around her, like in aspect to the gods, 5  
And loosed the mules, and bore the garments in.  
She sought her chamber, where an aged dame  
Attendant there, an Epirote, and named  
Eurymedusa, lighted her a fire.

She by the well-oared galleys had been brought 10  
Beforetime from Epirus, and was given  
To king Alcinoüs, ruler over all  
Phæacia's sons, who hearkened to his voice  
As if he were a god. 'T was she who reared  
White-armed Nausicaä in the royal halls, 15  
Tended her hearth, and dressed her evening meal.

Now rose Ulysses up, and townward turned  
His steps, while friendly Pallas wrapt his way  
In darkness, lest some one among the sons  
Of the Phæacians with unmannerly words 20  
Might call to him or ask him who he was.  
And just as he was entering that fair town  
The blue-eyed Pallas met him, in the form  
Of a young virgin with an urn. She stood



Before him, and Ulysses thus inquired : — 25

“ Wilt thou, my daughter, guide me to the house  
Where dwells Alcinoüs, he who rules this land ?  
I am a stranger, who have come from far  
After long hardships, and of all who dwell  
Within this realm I know not even one.” 30

Pallas, the blue-eyed goddess, thus replied : —  
“ Father and stranger, I will show the house ;  
The dwelling of my own good father stands  
Close by it. Follow silently, I pray,  
And I will lead. Look not on any man 35  
Nor ask a question ; for the people here  
Affect not strangers, nor do oft receive  
With kindly welcome him who comes from far.  
They trust in their swift barks, which to and fro,  
By Neptune’s favor, cross the mighty deep. 40  
Their galleys have the speed of wings or thought.”

Thus Pallas spake, and quickly led the way.  
He followed in her steps. They saw him not, —  
Those trained Phæacian seamen, — for the power  
That led him, Pallas of the amber hair, 45  
Forbade the sight, and threw a friendly veil  
Of darkness over him. Ulysses saw,  
Wondering, the haven and the gallant ships,  
The market-place where heroes thronged, the walls  
Long, lofty, and beset with palisades, 50  
A marvel to the sight. But when they came  
To the king’s stately palace, thus began  
The blue-eyed goddess, speaking to the chief : —

“Father and stranger, here thou seest the house  
Which thou hast bid me show thee. Thou wilt  
find

55

The princes, nurslings of the gods, within,  
Royally feasting. Enter, and fear not ;  
The bold man ever is the better man,  
Although he come from far. Thou first of all  
Wilt see the queen. Aretè is the name 60  
The people give her. She is of a stock  
The very same from which Alcinoüs  
The king derives his lineage. For long since  
Nausithoüs, its founder, was brought forth  
To Neptune, the great Shaker of the shores, 65  
By Peribæa, fairest of her sex,  
And youngest daughter of Eurymedon,  
The large of soul, who ruled the arrogant brood  
Of giants, and beheld that guilty race  
Cut off, and perished by a fate like theirs. 70  
Her Neptune wooed ; she bore to him a son,  
Large-souled Nausithoüs, whom Phæacia owned  
Its sovereign. To Nausithoüs were born  
Rhexenor and Alcinoüs. He who bears  
The silver bow, Apollo, smote to death 75  
Rhexenor, newly wedded, in his home.  
He left no son, and but one daughter, named  
Aretè ; her Alcinoüs made his wife,  
And honored her as nowhere else on earth  
Is any woman honored who bears charge 80  
Over a husband's household. From their hearts

Her children pay her reverence, and the king  
And all the people, for they look on her  
As if she were a goddess. When she goes  
Abroad into the streets, all welcome her 85  
With acclamations. Never does she fail  
In wise discernment, but decides disputes  
Kindly and justly between man and man.  
And if thou gain her favor, there is hope  
That thou mayst see thy friends once more, and  
stand 90

In thy tall palace on thy native soil."

The blue-eyed Pallas, having spoken thus,  
Departed o'er the barren deep. She left  
The pleasant isle of Scheria, and repaired  
To Marathon and to the spacious streets 95  
Of Athens, entering there the massive halls  
Where dwelt Erectheus, while Ulysses toward  
The gorgeous palace of Alcinoüs turned  
His steps, yet stopped and pondered ere he crossed  
The threshold. For on every side beneath 100  
The lofty roof of that magnanimous king  
A glory shone as of the sun or moon.  
There from the threshold, on each side, were walls  
Of brass that led towards the inner rooms,  
With blue steel cornices. The doors within 105  
The massive building were of gold, and posts  
Of silver on the brazen threshold stood,  
And silver was the lintel, and above  
Its architrave was gold ; and on each side

Stood gold and silver mastiffs, the rare work 110  
Of Vulcan's practised skill, placed there to guard  
The house of great Alcinoüs, and endowed  
With deathless life, that knows no touch of age.  
Along the walls within, on either side,  
And from the threshold to the inner rooms, 115  
Were firmly planted thrones on which were laid  
Delicate mantles, woven by the hands  
Of women. The Phæacian princes here  
Were seated ; here they ate and drank, and held  
Perpetual banquet. Slender forms of boys 120  
In gold upon the shapely altars stood,  
With blazing torches in their hands to light  
At eve the palace guests ; while fifty maids  
Waited within the halls, where some in querns  
Ground small the yellow grain ; some wove the  
web 125  
Or twirled the spindle, sitting, with a quick  
Light motion, like the aspen's glancing leaves.  
The well-wrought tissues glistened as with oil.  
As far as the Phæacian race excel  
In guiding their swift galleys o'er the deep, 130  
So far the women in their woven work  
Surpass all others. Pallas gives them skill  
In handiwork and beautiful design.  
Without the palace-court, and near the gate,  
A spacious garden of four acres lay. 135  
A hedge enclosed it round, and lofty trees  
Flourished in generous growth within, — the pear

And the pomegranate, and the apple-tree  
With its fair fruitage, and the luscious fig  
And olive always green. The fruit they bear 140  
Falls not, nor ever fails in winter time  
Nor summer, but is yielded all the year.  
The ever-blowing west-wind causes some  
To swell and some to ripen ; pear succeeds  
To pear ; to apple apple, grape to grape, 145  
Fig ripens after fig. A fruitful field  
Of vines was planted near ; in part it lay  
Open and basking in the sun, which dried  
The soil, and here men gathered in the grapes,  
And there they trod the wine-press. Farther on 150  
Were grapes unripened yet, which just had cast  
The flower, and others still which just began  
To redden. At the garden's furthest bound  
Were beds of many plants that all the year  
Bore flowers. There gushed two fountains : one of  
                  them 155  
Ran wandering through the field ; the other flowed  
Beneath the threshold to the palace-court,  
And all the people filled their vessels there.  
Such were the blessings which the gracious gods  
Bestowed on King Alcinoüs and his house. 160  
Ulysses, the great sufferer, standing there,  
Admired the sight ; and when he had beheld  
The whole in silent wonderment, he crossed  
The threshold quickly, entering the hall  
Where the Phæacian peers and princes poured 165

Wine from their goblets to the sleepless one,  
The Argus-queller, to whose deity  
They made the last libations when they thought  
Of slumber. The great sufferer, concealed  
In a thick mist, which Pallas raised and cast 170  
Around him, hastened through the hall and came  
Close to Aretè and Alcinoüs,  
The royal pair. Then did Ulysses clasp  
Aretè's knees, when suddenly the cloud  
Raised by the goddess vanished. All within 175  
The palace were struck mute as they beheld  
The man before them. Thus Ulysses prayed : —

“Aretè, daughter of the godlike chief  
Rhexenor ! to thy husband I am come  
And to thy knees, from many hardships borne, 180  
And to these guests, to whom may the good gods  
Grant to live happily, and to hand down,  
Each one to his own children, in his home,  
The wealth and honors which the people's love  
Bestowed upon him. Grant me, I entreat, 185  
An escort, that I may behold again  
And soon my own dear country. I have passed  
Long years in sorrow, far from all I love.”

He ended, and sat down upon the hearth  
Among the ashes, near the fire, and all 190  
Were silent utterly. At length outspoke  
Echeneus, oldest and most eloquent chief  
Of the Phæacians ; large his knowledge was  
Of things long past. With generous intent,

And speaking to the assembly, he began :— 195

“ Alcinoüs, this is not a seemly sight, —  
A stranger sitting on the hearth among  
The cinders. All the others here await  
Thy order, and move not. I pray thee, raise  
The stranger up, and seat him on a throne 200  
Studded with silver. Be thy heralds called,  
And bid them mingle wine, which we may pour  
To Jove, the god of thunders, who attends  
And honors every suppliant. Let the dame  
Who oversees the palace feast provide 205  
Our guest a banquet from the stores within.”

This when the reverend king Alcinoüs heard,  
Forthwith he took Ulysses by the hand, —  
That man of wise devices, — raised him up  
And seated him upon a shining throne, 210  
From which he bade Laodamas arise,  
His manly son, whose seat was next to his.

“ Now mingle wine, Protonoüs, in a vase,  
For all within the palace, to be poured  
To Jove, the god of thunders, who attends 215  
And honors every suppliant.” As he spake  
Protonoüs mingled the delicious wines,  
And passed from right to left, distributing  
The cups to all ; and when they all had poured  
A part to Jove, and all had drunk their fill, 220  
Alcinoüs took the word, and thus he said :—

“ Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians, hear.  
I speak as my heart bids me. Since the feast

Is over, take your rest within your homes.  
To-morrow shall the Senators be called 225  
In larger concourse. We will pay our guest  
Due honor in the palace, worshipping  
The gods with solemn sacrifice. And then  
Will we bethink us how to send him home,  
That with no hindrance and no hardship borne 230  
Under our escort he may come again  
Gladly and quickly to his native land,  
Though far away it lie, and that no wrong  
Or loss may happen to him ere he set  
Foot on its soil ; and there must he endure 235  
Whatever, when his mother brought him forth,  
Fate and the unrelenting Sisters spun  
For the new-born. But should he prove to be  
One of the immortals who has come from heaven,  
Then have the gods a different design. 240  
For hitherto the gods have shown themselves  
Visibly at our solemn hecatombs,  
And sat with us, and feasted like ourselves,  
And when the traveller meets with them alone,  
They never hide themselves ; for we to them 245  
Are near of kin, as near as is the race  
Of Cyclops and the savage giant brood."

Ulysses the sagacious answered him :—  
"Nay, think not so, Alcinoüs. I am not  
In form or aspect as the immortals are, 250  
Whose habitation is the ample heaven.  
But I am like whomever thou mayst know,



Among mankind, inured to suffering ;  
 To them shouldst thou compare me. I could tell  
 Of bitterer sorrows yet, which I have borne ; 255  
 Such was the pleasure of the gods. But now  
 Leave me, whatever have my hardships been,  
 To take the meal before me. Naught exceeds  
 The impatient stomach's importunity  
 When even the afflicted and the sorrowful 260  
 Are forced to heed its call. So even now,  
 Midst all the sorrow that is in my heart,  
 It bids me eat and drink, and put aside  
 The thought of my misfortunes till itself  
 Be satiate. But, ye princes, with the dawn 265  
 Provide for me, in my calamity,  
 The means to reach again my native land.  
 For, after all my hardships, I would die  
 Willingly, could I look on my estates,  
 My servants, and my lofty halls once more." 270

He ended ; they approved his words, and bade  
 Set forward on his homeward way the guest  
 Who spake so wisely. When they all had made  
 Libations and had drunk, they each withdrew  
 To sleep at home, and left the noble chief 275  
 Ulysses in the palace, where with him  
 Aretè and her godlike husband sat,  
 While from the feast the maidens bore away  
 The chargers. The white-armed Aretè then  
 Began to speak ; for when she cast her eyes 280  
 On the fair garments which Ulysses wore,

She knew the mantle and the tunic well,  
Wrought by herself and her attendant maids,  
And thus with winged words bespake the chief :—

“ Stranger, I first must ask thee who thou art, 235  
And of what race of men. From whom hast thou  
Received those garments? Sure thou dost not say  
That thou art come from wandering o’er the sea.”

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus :—  
“ ’T were hard, O sovereign lady, to relate 290  
In order all my sufferings, for the gods  
Of heaven have made them many ; yet will I  
Tell all thou askest of me, and obey  
Thy bidding. Far within the ocean lies  
An island named Ogygia, where abides 295  
Calypso, artful goddess, with bright locks,  
Daughter of Atlas, and of dreaded power.  
No god consorts with her, nor any one  
Of mortal birth. But me in my distress  
Some god conveyed alone to her abode, 300  
When, launching his white lightning, Jupiter  
Had cloven in the midst of the black sea  
My galley. There my gallant comrades all  
Perished, but I in both my arms held fast  
The keel of my good ship, and floated on 305  
Nine days till, on the tenth, in the dark night,  
The gods had brought me to Ogygia’s isle,  
Where dwells Calypso of the radiant hair  
And dreaded might, who kindly welcomed me,  
And cherished me, and would have made my life 310

Immortal, and beyond the power of age  
In all the coming time. And there I wore  
Seven years away, still moistening with my tears  
The ambrosial raiment which the goddess gave.  
But when the eighth year had begun its round 315  
She counselled my departure, whether Jove  
Had so required, or she herself had changed  
Her purpose. On a raft made strong with clamps  
She placed me, sent on board an ample store  
Of bread and pleasant wine, and made me put 320  
Ambrosial garments on, and gave a soft  
And favorable wind. For seventeen days  
I held my steady course across the deep,  
And on the eighteenth day the shadowy heights  
Of your own isle appeared, and then my heart, 325  
Ill-fated as I was, rejoiced. Yet still  
Was I to struggle with calamities  
Sent by earth-shaking Neptune, who called up  
The winds against me, and withstood my way,  
And stirred the boundless ocean to its depths. 330  
Nor did the billows suffer me to keep  
My place, but swept me, groaning, from the raft,  
Whose planks they scattered. Still I labored through  
The billowy depth, and swam, till wind and wave  
Drove me against your coast. As there I sought 335  
To land, I found the surges hurrying me  
Against huge rocks that lined the frightful shore ;  
But, turning back, I swam again and reached  
A river and the landing-place I wished,

Smooth, without rocks, and sheltered from the wind.  
I swooned, but soon revived. Ambrosial night 341  
Came on. I left the Jove-descended stream  
And slept among the thickets, drawing round  
My limbs the withered leaves, while on my lids  
A deity poured bounteously the balm 345  
Of slumber. All night long, among the leaves,  
I slept, with all that sorrow in my heart,  
Till morn, till noon. Then as the sun went down  
The balmy slumber left me, and I saw  
Thy daughter's handmaids sporting on the shore, 350  
And her among them, goddess-like. To her  
I came a suppliant, nor did she receive  
My suit unkindly as a maid so young  
Might do, for youth is foolish. She bestowed  
Food and red wine abundantly, and gave, 355  
When I had bathed, the garments I have on.  
Thus is my tale of suffering truly told."

And then Alcinoüs answered him and said : —  
"Stranger, one duty hath my child o'erlooked, —  
To bid thee follow hither with her maids, 360  
Since thou didst sue to her the first of all."

Ulysses, the sagacious, thus replied : —  
"Blame not for that, O hero, I entreat,  
Thy faultless daughter. She commanded me  
To follow with her maids, but I refrained 365  
For fear and awe of thee, lest, at the sight,  
Thou mightest be displeased ; for we are prone  
To dark misgivings, — we, the sons of men."

Again Alcinoüs spake : " The heart that beats  
Within my bosom is not rashly moved 370  
To wrath, and better is the temperate mood.  
This must I say, O Father Jupiter,  
And Pallas and Apollo ! I could wish  
That, being as thou art, and of like mind  
With me, thou wouldst receive to be thy bride 375  
My daughter, and be called my son-in-law,  
And here abide. A palace I would give,  
And riches, shouldst thou willingly remain.  
Against thy will let no Phæacian dare  
To keep thee here. May Father Jove forbid ! 380  
And that thou mayst be sure of my intent,  
I name to-morrow for thy voyage home.  
Sleep in thy bed till then ; and they shall row  
O'er the calm sea thy galley, till thou come  
To thine own land and home, or wheresoe'er 385  
Thou wilt, though further off the coast should be  
Than far Eubœa, most remote of lands, —  
So do the people of our isle declare,  
Who saw it when they over sea conveyed  
The fair-haired Rhadamanthus, on his way 390  
To visit Tityus, son of Earth. They went  
Thither, accomplishing with little toil  
Their voyage in the compass of a day,  
And brought the hero to our isle again.  
Now shalt thou learn, and in thy heart confess, 395  
How much our galleys and our youths excel  
With bladed oars to stir the whirling brine."

So spake the king, and the great sufferer  
Ulysses heard with gladness, and preferred  
A prayer, and called on Jupiter and said :— 400

“Grant, Father Jove, that all the king has said  
May be fulfilled ! so shall his praise go forth  
Over the foodful earth, and never die,  
And I shall see my native land again.”

So they conferred. White-armed Aretè spake, 405  
And bade her maidens in the portico  
Place couches, and upon them lay fair rugs  
Of purple dye, and tapestry on these,  
And for the outer covering shaggy cloaks.

Forth from the hall they issued, torch in hand ; 410  
And when with speed the ample bed was made,  
They came and summoned thus the chief to rest :—

“Rise, stranger, go to rest ; thy bed is made.”  
Thus spake the maidens, and the thought of sleep  
Was welcome to Ulysses. So that night 415  
On his deep couch the noble sufferer  
Slumbered beneath the sounding portico.  
Alcinoüs laid him down in a recess  
Within his lofty palace, near to whom  
The queen his consort graced the marriage-bed. 420

## BOOK VIII.

WHEN Morn appeared, the rosy-fingered child  
Of Dawn, Alcinoüs, mighty and revered,  
Rose from his bed. Ulysses, noble chief,  
Spoiler of cities, also left his couch.  
Alcinoüs, mighty and revered, went forth 5  
Before, and led him to the market-place  
Of the Phæacians, built beside the fleet,  
And there on polished stones they took their seats  
Near to each other. Pallas, who now seemed  
A herald of the wise Alcinoüs, went 10  
Through all the city, planning how to send  
Magnanimous Ulysses to his home,  
And came and stood by every chief and said :—

“Leaders and chiefs of the Phæacians, come  
Speedily to the market-place, and there 15  
Hear of the stranger who from wandering o’er  
The deep has come where wise Alcinoüs holds  
His court ; in aspect he is like the gods.”

She spake, and every mind and heart was moved,  
And all the market-place and all its seats 20  
Were quickly filled with people. Many gazed,  
Admiring, on Laertes’ well-graced son ;  
For on his face and form had Pallas shed  
A glory, and had made him seem more tall  
And of an ampler bulk, that he might find 25  
Favor with the Phæacians, and be deemed

Worthy of awe and able to achieve  
The many feats which the Phæacian chiefs,  
To try the stranger's prowess, might propose.

And now when all the summoned had arrived, 30  
Alcinoüs to the full assembly spake :—

“Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians, hear :  
I speak the promptings of my heart. This guest —  
I know him not — has come to my abode,  
A wanderer, — haply from the tribes who dwell 35  
In the far East, or haply from the West, —  
And asked an escort and safe-conduct home ;  
And let us make them ready, as our wont  
Has ever been. No stranger ever comes  
Across my threshold who is suffered long 40  
To pine for his departure. Let us draw  
A dark-hulled ship down to the holy sea  
On her first voyage. Let us choose her crew  
Among the people, two-and-fifty youths  
Of our best seamen. Then make fast the oars 45  
Beside the benches, leave them there, and come  
Into our palace and partake in haste  
A feast which I will liberally spread  
For all of you. This I command the youths ;  
But you, ye sceptred princes, come at once 50  
To my fair palace, that we there may pay  
The honors due our guest ; let none refuse.  
Call also the divine Demodocus,  
The bard, on whom a deity bestowed  
In ample measure the sweet gift of song, 55



Delightful when the spirit prompts the lay."

He spake, and led the way ; the sceptred train  
Of princes followed him. The herald sought  
Meantime the sacred bard. The chosen youths  
Fifty-and-two betook them to the marge 60  
Of the unfruitful sea ; and when they reached  
The ship and beach they drew the dark hull down  
To the deep water, put the mast on board  
And the ship's sails, and fitted well the oars  
Into the leathern rings, and, having moored 65  
Their bark in the deep water, went with speed  
To their wise monarch in his spacious halls.  
There portico and court and hall were thronged  
With people, young and old in multitude ;  
And there Alcinoüs sacrificed twelve sheep, 70  
Eight white-toothed swine, and two splay-footed  
beeves.

And these they flayed, and duly dressed, and made  
A noble banquet ready. Then appeared  
The herald, leading the sweet singer in,  
Him whom the Muse with an exceeding love 75  
Had cherished, and had visited with good  
And evil, quenched his eyesight and bestowed  
Sweetness of song. Pontonoüs mid the guests  
Placed for the bard a silver-studded throne,  
Against a lofty column hung his harp 80  
Above his head, and taught him how to find  
And take it down. Near him the herald set  
A basket and fair table, and a cup

Of wine, that he might drink when he desired ;  
Then all put forth their hands and shared the feast. 85

And when their thirst and hunger were allayed,  
The Muse inspired the bard to sing the praise  
Of heroes ; 't was a song whose fame had reached  
To the high heaven, a story of the strife  
Between Ulysses and Achilles, son 90  
Of Peleus, wrangling at a solemn feast  
Made for the gods. They strove with angry words,  
And Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced  
To hear the noblest of the Achaian host  
Contending ; for all this had been foretold 95  
To him in sacred Pythia by the voice  
Of Phœbus, when the monarch to inquire  
At the oracle had crossed the rock which formed  
Its threshold. Then began the train of woes  
Which at the will of sovereign Jupiter 100  
Befell the sons of Ilium and of Greece.

So sang renowned Demodocus. Meanwhile  
Ulysses took into his brawny hands  
An ample veil of purple, drawing it  
Around his head to hide his noble face, 105  
Ashamed that the Phæacians should behold  
The tears that flowed so freely from his lids.  
But when the sacred bard had ceased his song,  
He wiped the tears away and laid the veil  
Aside, and took a double beaker filled 110  
With wine, and poured libations to the gods.  
Yet when again the minstrel sang, and all

The chiefs of the Phæacian people, charmed  
 To hear his music, bade the strain proceed,  
 Again Ulysses hid his face and wept. 115  
 No other eye beheld the tears he shed.  
 Alcinoüs only watched him, and perceived  
 His grief, and heard the sighs he drew, and spake  
 To the Phæacians, lovers of the sea : —

“ Now that we all, to our content, have shared 120  
 The feast and heard the harp, whose notes so well  
 Suit with a liberal banquet, let us forth  
 And try our skill in games, that this our guest,  
 Returning to his country, may relate  
 How in the boxing and the wrestling match, 125  
 In leaping and in running, we excel.”

He spake, and went before ; they followed him.  
 Then did the herald hang the clear-toned harp  
 Again on high, and taking by the hand  
 Demodocus, he led him from the place, 130  
 Guiding him in the way which just before  
 The princes of Phæacia trod to see  
 The public games. Into the market-place  
 They went ; a vast innumerable crowd  
 Pressed after. Then did many a valiant youth 135  
 Arise, — Acroneus and Ocyalus,  
 Elatreus, Nauteus, Prymneus, after whom  
 Upstood Anchialus, and by his side  
 Eretmeus, Ponteus, Proreus, Thoön, rose ;  
 Anabasineüs and Amphialus, 140  
 A son of Polyneius, Tecton's son ;

Then rose the son of Naubolus, like Mars  
In warlike port, Euryalus by name,  
And goodliest both in feature and in form  
Of all Phæacia's sons save one alone, 145  
Laodamas the faultless. Next three sons  
Of King Alcinoüs rose : Laodamas,  
Halius, and Clytoneius, like a god  
In aspect. Some of these began the games,  
Contending in the race. For them a course 150  
Was marked from goal to goal. They darted forth  
At once and swiftly, raising, as they ran,  
The dust along the plain. The swiftest there  
Was Clytoneius in the race. As far  
As mules, in furrowing the fallow ground, 155  
Gain on the steers, he ran before the rest,  
And reached the crowd, and left them all behind.  
Others in wrestling strove laboriously, —  
And here Euryalus excelled them all ;  
But in the leap Amphialus was first ; 160  
Elatreus flung the quoit with firmest hand ;  
And in the boxer's art Laodamas,  
The monarch's valiant son, was conqueror.

This when the admiring multitude had seen,  
Thus spake the monarch's son, Laodamas : — 165

“ And now, my friends, inquire we of our guest  
If he has learned and practised feats like these.  
For he is not ill-made in legs and thighs  
And in both arms, in firmly planted neck  
And strong-built frame ; nor does he seem to lack 170

A certain youthful vigor, though impaired  
By many hardships, — for I know of naught  
That more severely tries the strongest man,  
And breaks him down, than perils of the sea.”

Euryalus replied : “ Laodamas, 175  
Well hast thou said, and rightly : go thou now  
And speak to him thyself, and challenge him.”

The son of King Alcinoüs, as he heard,  
Came forward, and bespake Ulysses thus : —

“ Thou also, guest and father, try these feats, 180  
If thou perchance wert trained to them. I think  
Thou must be skilled in games, since there is not  
A greater glory for a man while yet  
He lives on earth than what he hath wrought out,  
By strenuous effort, with his feet and hands. 185  
Try, then, thy skill, and give no place to grief.  
Not long will thy departure be delayed ;  
Thy bark is launched ; the crew are ready here.”

Ulysses, the sagacious, answered thus : —  
“ Why press me, O Laodamas ! to try 190  
These feats, when all my thoughts are of my woes,  
And not of games ? I, who have borne so much  
Of pain and toil, sit pining for my home  
In your assembly, supplicating here  
Your king and all the people of your land.” 195

Then spake Euryalus with chiding words : —  
“ Stranger, I well perceive thou canst not boast,  
As many others can, of skill in games ;  
But thou art one of those who dwell in ships

With many benches, rulers o'er a crew 200  
Of sailors, — a mere trader looking out  
For freight, and watching o'er the wares that form  
The cargo. Thou hast doubtless gathered wealth  
By rapine, and art surely no athlete."

Ulysses, the sagacious, frowned and said : — 205  
"Stranger, thou speakest not becomingly,  
But like a man who recks not what he says.  
The gods bestow not equally on all  
The gifts that men desire, — the grace of form,  
The mind, the eloquence. One man to sight 210  
Is undistinguished, but on him the gods  
Bestow the power of words. All look on him  
Gladly ; he knows whereof he speaks ; his speech  
Is mild and modest ; he is eminent  
In all assemblies, and, whene'er he walks 215  
The city, men regard him as a god.  
Another in the form he wears is like  
The immortals, yet has he no power to speak  
Becoming words. So thou hast comely looks, —  
A god would not have shaped thee otherwise 220  
Than we behold thee, — yet thy wit is small,  
And thy unmannerly words have angered me  
Even to the heart. Not quite unskilled am I  
In games, as thou dost idly talk, and once,  
When I could trust my youth and my strong arms, 225  
I think that in these contests I was deemed  
Among the first. But I am now pressed down  
With toil and sorrow ; much have I endured

In wars with heroes and on stormy seas.  
Yet even thus, a sufferer as I am, 230  
Will I essay these feats ; for sharp have been  
Thy words, and they provoke me to the proof."

He spake, and rising with his mantle on  
He seized a broader, thicker, heavier quoit,  
By no small odds, than the Phæacians used, 235  
And swinging it around with vigorous arm  
He sent it forth ; it sounded as it went ;  
And the Phæacians, skilful with the oar  
And sail, bent low as o'er them, from his hand,  
Flew the swift stone beyond the other marks. 240  
And Pallas, in a human form, set up  
A mark where it descended, and exclaimed :—

" Stranger ! a blind man, groping here, could find  
Thy mark full easily, since it is not  
Among the many, but beyond them all. 245  
Then fear thou nothing in this game at least ;  
For no Phæacian here can throw the quoit  
As far as thou, much less exceed thy cast."

She spake ; Ulysses the great sufferer  
Heard, and rejoiced to know he had a friend 250  
In that great circle. With a lighter heart  
Thus said the chief to the Phæacian crowd :—

" Follow that cast, young men, and I will send  
Another stone, at once, as far, perchance,  
Or further still. If there are others yet 255  
Who feel the wish, let them come forward here,—  
For much your words have chafed me, — let them try

With me the boxing or the wrestling match,  
Or foot-race ; there is naught that I refuse, —  
Any of the Phæacians. I except 260  
Laodamas ; he is my host, and who  
Would enter such a contest with a friend ?  
A senseless, worthless man is he who seeks  
A strife like this with one who shelters him  
In a strange land ; he mars the welcome given. 265  
As for the rest, there is no rival here  
Whom I reject or scorn ; for I would know  
Their prowess, and would try my own with theirs  
Before you all. At any of the games  
Practised among mankind I am not ill, 270  
Whatever they may be. The polished bow  
I well know how to handle. I should be  
The first to strike a foe by arrows sent  
Among a hostile squadron, though there stood  
A crowd of fellow-warriors by my side 275  
And also aimed their shafts. The only one  
Whose skill in archery excelled my own,  
When we Achæians drew the bow at Troy,  
Was Philoctetes ; to all other men  
On earth that live by bread I hold myself 280  
Superior. Yet I claim no rivalry  
With men of ancient times, — with Hercules  
And Eurytus the Œchalian, who defied  
The immortals to a contest with the bow.  
Therefore was mighty Eurytus cut off. 285  
Apollo, angry to be challenged, slew



The hero. I can hurl a spear beyond  
 Where others send an arrow. All my fear  
 Is for my feet, so weakened have I been  
 Among the stormy waves with want of food 290  
 At sea, and thus my limbs have lost their strength."

He ended here, and all the assembly sat  
 In silence ; King Alcinoüs only spake : —  
 " Stranger, since thou dost speak without offence,  
 And but to assert the prowess of thine arm, 295  
 Indignant that amid the public games  
 This man should rail at thee, and since thy wish  
 Is only that all others who can speak  
 Becomingly may not in time to come  
 Dispraise that prowess, now, then, heed my words, 300  
 And speak of them within thy palace halls  
 To other heroes when thou banquetest  
 Beside thy wife and children, and dost think  
 Of things that we excel in, — arts which Jove  
 Gives us, transmitted from our ancestors. 305  
 In boxing and in wrestling small renown  
 Have we, but we are swift of foot ; we guide  
 Our galleys bravely o'er the deep ; we take  
 Delight in feasts ; we love the harp, the dance,  
 And change of raiment, the warm bath and bed. 310  
 Rise, then, Phæacian masters of the dance,  
 And tread your measures, that our guest may tell  
 His friends at home how greatly we surpass  
 All other men in seamanship, the race,  
 The dance, the art of song. Go, one of you, 315

And bring Demodocus his clear-toned harp,  
That somewhere in our palace has been left."

Thus spake the godlike king. The herald rose  
To bring the sweet harp from the royal house.  
Then the nine umpires also rose, who ruled 320  
The games ; they smoothed the floor, and made the  
ring

Of gazers wider. Next the herald came,  
And brought Demodocus the clear-toned harp.  
The minstrel went into the midst, and there  
Gathered the graceful dancers ; they were youths 325  
In life's first bloom. With even steps they smote  
The sacred floor. Ulysses, gazing, saw  
The twinkle of their feet and was amazed.  
The minstrel struck the chords and gracefully  
Began the lay : he sang the loves of Mars 330  
And Venus of the glittering crown, who first  
Had met each other stealthily beneath  
The roof of Vulcan. Mars with many gifts  
Won her, and wronged her spouse, the King of Fire ;  
But from the Sun, who saw their guilt, there came 335  
A messenger to Vulcan. When he heard  
The unwelcome tidings, planning his revenge,  
He hastened to his smithy, where he forged  
Chains that no power might loosen or might break,  
Made to hold fast forever. When the snare 340  
In all its parts was finished, he repaired,  
Angry with Mars, to where the marriage-bed  
Stood in his chamber. To the posts he tied

The encircling chains on every side, and made  
Fast to the ceiling many, like the threads 345  
Spun by the spider, which no eye could see,  
Not even of the gods, so artfully  
He wrought them. Then, as soon as he had wrapped  
The snare about the bed, he feigned to go  
To Lemnos nobly built, most dear to him 350  
Of all the lands. But Mars, the god who holds  
The shining reins, had kept no careless watch,  
And when he saw the great artificer  
Depart he went with speed to Vulcan's house,  
Drawn thither by the love of her who wears 355  
The glittering crown. There Cytherea sat,  
Arrived that moment from a visit paid.  
Entering, he took her by the hand and said : —

“Come, my beloved, let us to the couch.  
Vulcan is here no longer ; he is gone, 360  
And is among the Sintians, men who speak  
A barbarous tongue, in Lemnos far away.”

He spake, and she approved his words, and both  
Lay down upon the bed, when suddenly  
The network, wrought by Vulcan's skilful hand, 365  
Caught them, and clasped them round, nor could  
they lift

Or move a limb, and saw that no escape  
Was possible. And now approached the King  
Of Fire, returning ere he reached the isle  
Of Lemnos, for the Sun in his behalf 370  
Kept watch and told him all. He hastened home

In bitterness of heart, but when he reached  
The threshold stopped. A fury without bounds  
Possessed him, and he shouted terribly,  
And called aloud on all the gods of heaven : — 375

“ O Father Jove, and all ye blessed ones,  
And deathless ! Come, for here is what will move  
Your laughter, yet is not to be endured.  
Jove’s daughter, Venus, thus dishonors me,  
Lame as I am, and loves the butcher Mars ; 380  
For he is well to look at, and is sound  
Of foot, while I am weakly, — but for this  
Are none but my two parents to be blamed,  
Who never should have given me birth. Behold  
Where lie embraced the lovers in my bed, — 385  
A hateful sight. Yet they will hardly take  
Even a short slumber there, though side by side,  
Enamored as they are ; nor will they both  
Be drowsy very soon. The net and chains  
Will hold them till her father shall restore 390  
All the large gifts which, on our marriage-day,  
I gave him to possess the impudent minx  
His daughter, who is fair, indeed, but false.”

He spake, and to the brazen palace flocked  
The gods ; there Neptune came, who shakes the  
earth ; 395

There came beneficent Hermes ; there too came  
Apollo, archer-god ; the goddesses,  
Through womanly reserve, remained at home.  
Meantime the gods, the givers of all good,

Stood in the entrance ; and as they beheld 400  
 The cunning snare of Vulcan, there arose  
 Infinite laughter from the blessed ones,  
 And one of them bespake his neighbor thus : —

“ Wrong prospers not ; the slow o’ertakes the  
 swift.

Vulcan the slow has trapped the fleetest god 405  
 Upon Olympus, Mars ; though lame himself,  
 His net has taken the adulterér,  
 Who now must pay the forfeit of his crime.”

So talked they with each other. Then the son  
 Of Jove, Apollo, thus to Hermes said : — 410

“ Hermes, thou son and messenger of Jove,  
 And bountiful of gifts, couldst thou endure,  
 Fettered with such strong chains as these, to lie  
 Upon a couch with Venus at thy side ? ”

The herald-god, the Argus-queller, thus 415  
 Made answer : “ Nay, I would that it were so,  
 O archer-king, Apollo ; I could bear  
 Chains thrice as many, and of infinite strength,  
 And all the gods and all the goddesses  
 Might come to look upon me, I would keep 420  
 My place with golden Venus at my side.”

He spake, and all the immortals laughed to  
 hear.

Neptune alone laughed not, but earnestly  
 Prayed Vulcan, the renowned artificer,  
 To set Mars free, and spake these winged words : — 425

“ Release thy prisoner. What thou dost require

I promise here, — that he shall make to thee  
Due recompense in presence of the gods.”

Illustrious Vulcan answered : “ Do not lay,  
Earth-shaking Neptune, this command on me, 434  
Since little is the worth of pledges given  
For worthless debtors. How could I demand  
My right from thee among the assembled gods,  
If Mars, set free, escape from debt and chains? ”

Again the god who shakes the earth replied : — 435  
“ Vulcan, though Mars deny the forfeit due,  
And take to flight, it shall be paid by me.”

Again illustrious Vulcan said : “ Thy word  
I ought not and I seek not to decline.”

He spake, and then the might of Vulcan loosed 440  
The net, and, freed from those strong fetters, both  
The prisoners sprang away. Mars flew to Thrace,  
And laughter-loving Venus to the isle  
Of Cyprus, where at Paphos stand her grove  
And perfumed altar. Here the Graces gave 445  
The bath, anointed with ambrosial oil  
Her limbs, — such oil as to the eternal gods  
Lends a fresh beauty, and arrayed her last  
In graceful robes, a marvel to behold.

So sang the famous bard, while inly pleased 450  
Ulysses heard, and pleased were all the rest,  
Phæacia’s sons, expert with oar and sail.

Alcinoüs called his sons Laodamas  
And Halios forth, and bade them dance alone,  
For none of all the others equalled them. 455

Then taking a fair purple ball, the work  
Of skilful Polybus, and, bending back,  
One flung it toward the shadowy clouds on high,  
The other springing upward easily  
Grasped it before he touched the ground again. 450  
And when they thus had tossed the ball awhile,  
They danced upon the nourishing earth, and oft  
Changed places with each other, while the youths,  
That stood within the circle filled the air  
With their applauses ; mighty was the din. 465  
Then great Ulysses to Alcinoüs said : —

“ O King Alcinoüs ! mightiest of the race  
For whom thou hast engaged that they excel  
All others in the dance, what thou hast said  
Is amply proved. I look and am amazed.” 470

Well pleased Alcinoüs the mighty heard,  
And thus to his seafaring people spake : —

“ Leaders and chiefs of the Phæacians, hear !  
Wise seems the stranger. Haste we to bestow  
Gifts that may well beseem his liberal hests. 475  
Twelve honored princes in our land bear sway,  
The thirteenth prince am I. Let each one bring  
A well-bleached cloak, a tunic, and beside  
Of precious gold a talent Let them all  
Be brought at once, that, having seen them here, 480  
Our guest may with a cheerful heart partake  
The evening meal. And let Euryalus,  
Who spake but now so unbecomingly,  
Appease him both with words and with a gift.”

He spake ; they all approved, and each one sent <sup>485</sup>  
His herald with a charge to bring the gifts,  
And thus Euryalus addressèd the king : —

“ O King Alcinoüs, mightiest of our race,  
I will obey thee, and will seek to appease  
Our guest. This sword of brass will I bestow, <sup>490</sup>  
With hilt of silver, and an ivory sheath  
New wrought, which he may deem a gift of price.”

He spake, and gave the silver-studded sword  
Into his hand, and spake these winged words : —

“ Stranger and father, hail ! If any word <sup>495</sup>  
That hath been uttered gave offence, may storms  
Sweep it away forever. May the gods  
Gíve thee to see thy wife again, and reach  
Thy native land, where all thy sufferings  
And this long absence from thy friends shall end ! ” <sup>500</sup>

Ulysses, the sagacious, thus replied : —  
“ Hail also, friend ! and may the gods confer  
On thee all happiness, and may the time  
Never arrive when thou shalt miss the sword  
Placed in my hands with reconciling words ! ” <sup>505</sup>

He spake, and slung the silver-studded sword  
Upon his shoulders. Now the sun went down,  
And the rich presents were already brought.  
The noble heralds came and carried them  
Into the palace of Alcinoüs, where <sup>510</sup>  
His blameless sons received and ranged them all  
In fair array before the queenly dame  
Their mother. Meantime had the mighty king



Alcinoüs to his palace led the way,  
 Where they who followed took the lofty seats, 515  
 And thus Alcinoüs to Aretè said:—

“Bring now a coffer hither, fairly shaped,  
 The best we have, and lay a well-bleached cloak  
 And tunic in it ; set upon the fire  
 A brazen caldron for our guest, to warm 520  
 The water of his bath, that having bathed  
 And viewed the gifts which the Phæacian chiefs  
 Have brought him, ranged in order, he may sit  
 Delighted at the banquet and enjoy  
 The music. I will give this beautiful cup 525  
 Of gold, that he, in memory of me,  
 May daily in his palace pour to Jove  
 Libations, and to all the other gods.”

He spake ; Aretè bade her maidens haste  
 To place an ample tripod on the fire. 530  
 Forthwith upon the blazing fire they set  
 A laver with three feet, and in it poured  
 Water, and heaped fresh fuel on the flames.  
 The flames crept up the vessel's swelling sides,  
 And warmed the water. Meantime from her room 535  
 Aretè brought a beautiful chest, in which  
 She laid the presents destined for her guest, —  
 Garments and gold which the Phæacians gave, —  
 And laid the cloak and tunic with the rest,  
 And thus in winged words addressed the chief: — 540

“Look to the lid thyself, and cast a cord  
 Around it, lest, upon thy voyage home,

Thou suffer loss, when haply thou shalt take  
A pleasant slumber in the dark-hulled ship."

Ulysses, the sagacious, heard, and straight 545  
He fitted to its place the lid, and wound  
And knotted artfully around the chest  
A cord, as queenly Circè long before  
Had taught him. Then to call him to the bath  
The housewife of the palace came. He saw 550  
Gladly the steaming laver, for not oft  
Had he been cared for thus, since he had left  
The dwelling of the nymph with amber hair,  
Calypso, though attended while with her  
As if he were a god. Now when the maids 555  
Had seen him bathed, and had anointed him  
With oil, and put his sumptuous mantle on,  
And tunic, forth he issued from the bath,  
And came to those who sat before their wine.  
Nausicaä, goddess-like in beauty, stood 560  
Beside a pillar of that noble roof,  
And looking on Ulysses as he passed,  
Admired, and said to him in winged words :—

"Stranger, farewell, and in thy native land  
Remember thou hast owed thy life to me." 565

Ulysses, the sagacious, answering said :—  
"Nausicaä, daughter of the large-souled king  
Alcinoüs! so may Jove, the Thunderer,  
Husband of Juno, grant that I behold  
My home, returning safe, as I will make 570  
To thee as to a goddess day by day

My prayer ; for, lady, thou hast saved my life."

He spake, and near Alcinoüs took his place  
Upon a throne. And now they served the feast  
To each, and mingled wine. A herald led 575  
Thither the gentle bard Demodocus,  
Whom all the people honored. Him they placed  
Amidst the assembly, where he leaned against  
A lofty column. Sage Ulysses then  
Carved from the broad loin of a white-tusked boar 580  
A part, where yet a mass of flesh remained  
Bordered with fat, and to the herald said :—

"Bear this, O herald, to Demodocus,  
That he may eat. Him, even in my grief,  
Will I embrace, for worthily the bards 585  
Are honored and revered o'er all the earth  
By every race of men. The Muse herself  
Hath taught them song ; she loves the minstrel tribe."

He spake ; the herald laid the flesh before  
Demodocus the hero, who received 590  
The gift well pleased. Then all the guests put forth  
Their hands and shared the viands on the board ;  
And when their thirst and hunger were allayed,  
Thus to the minstrel sage Ulysses spake :—

"Demodocus, above all other men 595  
I give thee praise, for either has the Muse,  
Jove's daughter, or Apollo, visited  
And taught thee. Truly hast thou sung the fate  
Of the Achaian warriors, — what they did  
And suffered, — all their labors as if thou 600

Hadst been among them, or hadst heard the tale  
From an eye-witness. Now, I pray, proceed,  
And sing the invention of the wooden horse  
Made by Epeius with Minerva's aid,  
And by the chief Ulysses artfully 605  
Conveyed into the Trojan citadel,  
With armed warriors in its womb to lay  
The city waste. And I, if thou relate  
The story rightly, will at once declare  
To all that largely hath some bounteous god 610  
Bestowed on thee the holy gift of song."

He spake ; the poet felt the inspiring god,  
And sang, beginning where the Argives hurled  
Firebrands among their tents, and sailed away  
In their good galleys, save the band that sat 615  
Beside renowned Ulysses in the horse,  
Concealed from sight, amid the Trojan crowd,  
Who now had drawn it to the citadel.  
So there it stood, while, sitting round it, talked  
The men of Troy, and wist not what to do. 620  
By turns three counsels pleased them,—to hew down  
The hollow trunk with the remorseless steel ;  
Or drag it to a height, and cast it thence  
Headlong among the rocks ; or, lastly, leave  
The enormous image standing and unharmed, 625  
An offering to appease the gods. And this  
At last was done ; for so had fate decreed  
That they should be destroyed whene'er their town  
Should hold within its walls the horse of wood,

In which the mightiest of the Argives came 630  
 Among the sons of Troy to smite and slay.  
 Then sang the bard how, issuing from the womb  
 Of that deceitful horse, the sons of Greece  
 Laid Ilium waste ; how each in different ways  
 Ravaged the town, while, terrible as Mars, 635  
 Ulysses, joined with Menelaus, sought  
 The palace of Deiphobus, and there  
 Maintained a desperate battle, till the aid  
 Of mighty Pallas made the victory his.

So sang renowned Demodocus ; the strain 640  
 Melted to tears Ulysses, from whose lids  
 They dropped and wet his cheeks. As when a wife  
 Weeps her beloved husband, slain before  
 His town and people, fighting to defend  
 Them and his own dear babes from deadly harm, 645  
 She sees him gasp and die, and at the sight  
 She falls with piercing cries upon his corpse,  
 Meantime the victors beat her on the back  
 And shoulders with their spears, and bear her off  
 To toil and grieve in slavery, where her cheeks 650  
 In that long bitter sorrow lose their bloom ;  
 So from the eyelids of Ulysses fell  
 The tears, yet fell unnoticed by them all  
 Save that Alcinoüs, sitting at his side,  
 Saw them, and heard his heavy sighs, and thus 655  
 Bespake his people, masters of the oar :—

“ Princes and chiefs of the Phæacian race,  
 Give ear. Let now Demodocus lay by

His clear-toned harp. The matter of his song  
Delights not all alike. Since first we sat 660  
At meat, and since our noble bard began  
His lay, our guest has never ceased to grieve ;  
Some mighty sorrow weighs upon his heart.  
Now let the bard refrain, that we may all  
Enjoy the banquet, both our guest and we 665  
Who welcome him, for it is fitting thus.  
And now are all things for our worthy guest  
Made ready, both the escort and these gifts,  
The pledges of our kind regard. A guest,  
A suppliant, is a brother, even to him 670  
Who bears a heart not easy to be moved.  
No longer, then, keep back with studied art  
What I shall ask ; 't were better far to speak  
With freedom. Tell the name thy mother gave,  
Thy father, and all those who dwell within, 675  
And round thy city. For no living man  
Is nameless from the time that he is born.  
Humble or high in station, at their birth  
The parents give them names. Declare thy land,  
Thy people, and thy city, that our ships 680  
May learn, and bear thee to the place ; for here  
In our Phæacian ships no pilots are,  
Nor rudders, as in ships of other lands.  
Ours know the thoughts and the intents of men.  
To them all cities and all fertile coasts 685  
Inhabited by men are known ; they cross  
The great sea scudding fast, involved in mist

And darkness, with no fear of perishing  
Or meeting harm. I heard Nausithoüs,  
My father, say that Neptune was displeased 690  
With us for safely bearing to their homes  
So many men, and that he would destroy  
In after time some good Phæacian ship,  
Returning from a convoy, in the waves  
Of the dark sea, and leave her planted there, 695  
A mountain huge and high, before our town.  
So did the aged chieftain prophesy ;  
The god, as best may please him, will fulfil  
My father's words, or leave them unfulfilled.  
Now tell me truly whither thou hast roamed, 700  
And what the tribes of men that thou hast seen ;  
Tell which of them are savage, rude, unjust,  
And which are hospitable and revere  
The blessed gods. Declare why thou didst weep  
And sigh when hearing what unhappy fate 705  
Befell the Argive and Achaian host  
And town of Troy. The gods decreed it ; they  
Ordain destruction to the sons of men,  
A theme of song thereafter. Hadst thou not  
Some valiant kinsman who was slain at Troy? 710  
A son-in-law? the father of thy wife?  
Nearest of all are they to us, save those  
Of our own blood. Or haply might it be  
Some bosom-friend, one eminently graced  
With all that wins our love ; for not less dear 715  
Than if he were a brother should we hold  
The wise and gentle man who is our friend."

## BOOK IX.

ULYSSES, the sagacious, answered thus :—  
“ O King Alcinoüs, most renowned of men !

A pleasant thing it is to hear a bard  
Like this, endowed with such a voice, so like  
The voices of the gods. Nor can I deem 5  
Aught more delightful than the general joy  
Of a whole people when the assembled guests  
Seated in order in the royal halls  
Are listening to the minstrel, while the board  
Is spread with bread and meats, and from the jars 10  
The cupbearer draws wine and fills the cups.  
To me there is no more delightful sight.

“ But now thy mind is moved to ask of me  
The story of the sufferings I have borne,  
And that will wake my grief anew. What first, 15  
What next, shall I relate ? what last of all ?  
For manifold are the misfortunes cast  
Upon me by the immortals. Let me first  
Declare my name, that ye may know, and I  
Perchance, before my day of death shall come, 20  
May be your host, though dwelling far away.  
I am Ulysses, and my father’s name  
Laertes ; widely am I known to men  
As quick in shrewd devices, and my fame  
Hath reached to heaven. In sunny Ithaca 25  
I dwell, where high Neritus, seen afar,



Rustles with woods. Around are many isles,  
 Well peopled, near each other. Samos there  
 Lies, with Dulichium, and Zacynthus dark  
 With forests. Ithaca, with its low shores, 30  
 Lies highest toward the setting sun ; the rest  
 Are on the side where first the morning breaks.  
 A rugged region 't is, but nourishes  
 Nobly its youths, nor have I ever seen  
 A sweeter spot on earth. Calypso late, 35  
 That glorious goddess, in her grotto long  
 Detained me from it, and desired that I  
 Should be her husband ; in her royal home  
 Æëan Circè, mistress of strange arts,  
 Detained me also, and desired that I 40  
 Should be her husband,—yet they could not  
 move

The purpose of my heart. For there is naught  
 More sweet and dear than our own native land  
 And parents, though perchance our lot be cast  
 In a rich home, yet far from our own kin 45  
 And in a foreign land. Now let me speak  
 Of the calamitous voyage which the will  
 Of Jove ordained on my return from Troy.

“ The wind that blew me from the Trojan shore  
 Bore me to the Ciconians, who abode 50  
 In Ismarus. I laid the city waste  
 And slew its dwellers, carried off their wives  
 And all their wealth and parted them among  
 My men, that none might want an equal share.

And then I warned them with all haste to leave 55  
The region. Madmen! they obeyed me not.

“And there they drank much wine, and on the  
beach

Slew many sheep and many slow-paced steers  
With crumpled horns. Then the Ciconians called  
To their Ciconian neighbors, braver men 60  
Than they, and more in number, whose abode  
Was on the mainland, trained to fight from steeds,  
Or, if need were, on foot. In swarms they came,  
Thick as new leaves or morning flowers in spring.  
Then fell on our unhappy company 65  
An evil fate from Jove, and many griefs.  
They formed their lines, and fought at our good  
ships,

Where man encountered man with brazen spears.  
While yet 't was morning, and the holy light  
Of day waxed brighter, we withstood the assault 70  
And kept our ground, although more numerous they.  
But when the sun was sloping toward the west  
The enemy prevailed; the Achaian band  
Was routed, and was made to flee. That day  
There perished from each galley of our fleet 75  
Six valiant men; the rest escaped with life.

“Onward we sailed, lamenting bitterly  
Our comrades slain, yet happy to escape  
From death ourselves. Nor did we put to sea  
In our good ships until we thrice had called 80  
Aloud by name each one of our poor friends

Who fell in battle by Ciconian hands.  
The Cloud-compeller, Jove, against us sent  
The north-wind in a hurricane, and wrapped  
The earth and heaven in clouds, and from the skies 85  
Fell suddenly the night. With stooping masts  
Our galleys scudded ; the strong tempest split  
And tore the sails ; we drew and laid them down  
Within the ships, in fear of utter wreck,  
And toward the mainland eagerly we turned 90  
The rudders. There we lay two days and nights,  
Worn out with grief and hardship. When at length  
The fair-haired Morning brought the third day round,  
We raised the masts, and, spreading the white sails  
To take the wind, we sat us down. The wind 95  
Carried us forward with the pilot's aid ;  
And then should I have reached my native land  
Safely, had not the currents and the waves  
Of ocean and the north-wind driven me back,  
What time I strove to pass Maleia's cape, 100  
And swept me to Cytheræ from my course.  
“ Still onward driven before those baleful winds  
Across the fishy deep for nine whole days,  
On the tenth day we reached the land where dwell  
The Lotus-eaters, men whose food is flowers. 105  
We landed on the mainland, and our crews  
Near the fleet galleys took their evening meal.  
And when we all had eaten and had drunk  
I sent explorers forth — two chosen men,  
A herald was the third — to learn what race 110

Of mortals nourished by the fruits of earth  
Possessed the land. They went and found themselves  
Among the Lotus-eaters soon, who used  
No violence against their lives, but gave  
Into their hands the lotus plant to taste. 115  
Whoever tasted once of that sweet food  
Wished not to see his native country more,  
Nor give his friends the knowledge of his fate.  
And then my messengers desired to dwell  
Among the Lotus-eaters, and to feed 120  
Upon the lotus, never to return.  
By force I led them weeping to the fleet,  
And bound them in the hollow ships beneath  
The benches. Then I ordered all the rest  
Of my beloved comrades to embark 125  
In haste, lest, tasting of the lotus, they  
Should think no more of home. All straightway went  
On board, and on the benches took their place,  
And smote the hoary ocean with their oars.

“Onward we sailed with sorrowing hearts, and  
reached 130

The country of the Cyclops, an untamed  
And lawless race, who, trusting to the gods,  
Plant not, nor plough the fields, but all things spring  
For them untended, — barley, wheat, and vines  
Yielding large clusters filled with wine, and nursed 135  
By showers from Jove. No laws have they ; they hold  
No councils. On the mountain heights they dwell  
In vaulted caves, where each one rules his wives

And children as he pleases ; none give heed  
To what the others do. Before the port 140  
Of that Cyclopean land there is an isle,  
Low-lying, neither near nor yet remote, —  
A woodland region, where the wild goats breed  
Innumerable ; for the foot of man  
Disturbs them not, and huntsmen toiling through 145  
Thick woods, or wandering over mountain heights,  
Enter not here. The fields are never grazed  
By sheep, nor furrowed by the plough, but lie  
Untilled, unsown, and uninhabited  
By man, and only feed the bleating goats. 150  
The Cyclops have no barks with crimson prows,  
Nor shipwrights skilled to frame a galley's deck  
With benches for the rowers, and equipped  
For any service, voyaging by turns  
To all the cities, as is often done 155  
By men who cross the deep from place to place,  
And make a prosperous region of an isle.  
No meagre soil is there ; it well might bear  
All fruits in their due time. Along the shore  
Of the gray deep are meadows smooth and moist. 160  
The vine would flourish long ; the ploughman's task  
Is easy, and the husbandman would reap  
Large harvests, for the mould is rich below.  
And there is a safe haven, where no need  
Of cable is ; no anchor there is cast, 165  
Nor hawsers fastened to the strand, but they  
Who enter there remain until it please

The mariners, with favorable wind,  
To put to sea again. A limpid stream  
Flows from a fount beneath a hollow rock 170  
Into that harbor at its further end,  
And poplars grow around it. Thither went  
Our fleet ; some deity had guided us  
Through the dark night, for nothing had we seen.  
Thick was the gloom around our barks ; the moon 175  
Shone not in heaven, the clouds had quenched her  
light.

No eye discerned the isle, nor the long waves  
That rolled against the shore, till our good ships  
Touched land, and, disembarking there, we gave  
Ourselves to sleep upon the water-side 180  
And waited for the holy Morn to rise.

“And when at length the daughter of the Dawn,  
The rosy-fingered Morn, appeared, we walked  
Around the isle, admiring as we went.  
Meanwhile the nymphs, the daughters of the God 185  
Who bears the ægis, roused the mountain goats,  
That so our crews might make their morning meal.  
And straightway from our ships we took in hand  
Our crooked bows and our long-bladed spears.

“ ‘ Let all the rest of my beloved friends 190  
Remain, while I, with my own bark and crew,  
Go forth to learn what race of men are these,  
Whether ill-mannered, savage, and unjust,  
Or kind to guests and reverent toward the gods.’

“I spake, and, having ordered all my crew 195

To go on board and cast the hawsers loose,  
Embarked on my own ship. They all obeyed,  
And manned the benches, sitting there in rows,  
And smote the hoary ocean with their oars.  
But when we came upon that neighboring coast, 200  
We saw upon its verge beside the sea  
A cave high vaulted, overbrowed with shrubs  
Of laurel. There much cattle lay at rest,  
Both sheep and goats. Around it was a court,  
A high enclosure of hewn stone, and pines 205  
Tall stemmed, and towering oaks. Here dwelt a  
man

Of giant bulk, who by himself, alone,  
Was wont to tend his flocks. He never held  
Converse with others, but devised apart  
His wicked deeds. A frightful prodigy 210  
Was he, and like no man who lives by bread,  
But more like a huge mountain summit, rough  
With woods, that towers alone above the rest.

“Then, bidding all the others stay and guard  
The ship, I chose among my bravest men 215  
Twelve whom I took with me. I had on board  
A goatskin of dark wine, — a pleasant sort,  
Which Maron late, Evanthès’ son, a priest  
Of Phœbus, guardian god of Ismarus,  
Gave me, when, moved with reverence, we saved 220  
Him and his children and his wife from death.  
For his abode was in the thick-grown grove  
Of Phœbus. Costly were the gifts he gave, —

Seven talents of wrought gold ; a chalice all  
Of silver ; and he drew for me, besides, 225  
Into twelve jars, a choice rich wine, unspoiled  
By mixtures, and a beverage for gods.

No one within his dwellings, maids or men,  
Knew of it, save the master and his wife,  
And matron of the household. Whensoever 230  
They drank this rich red wine, he only filled  
A single cup with wine, and tempered that  
With twenty more of water. From the cup  
Arose a fragrance that might please the gods,  
And hard it was to put the draught aside. 235

Of this I took a skin well filled, besides  
Food in a hamper, — for my thoughtful mind  
Mistake me, lest I should encounter one  
Of formidable strength and savage mood,  
And with no sense of justice or of right. 240

“Soon were we at the cave, but found not him  
Within it ; he was in the fertile meads,  
Tending his flocks. We entered, wondering much  
At all we saw. Around were baskets heaped  
With cheeses ; pens were thronged with lambs and  
kids, 245

Each in a separate fold ; the elder ones,  
The younger, and the newly yeaned, had each  
Their place apart. The vessels swam with whey, —  
Pails smoothly wrought, and buckets into which  
He milked the cattle. My companions then 250  
Begged me with many pressing words to take



Part of the cheeses, and, returning, drive  
With speed to our good galley lambs and kids  
From where they stabled, and set sail again  
On the salt sea. I granted not their wish ; 255  
Far better if I had. 'T was my intent  
To see the owner of the flocks and prove  
His hospitality. No pleasant sight  
Was that to be for those with whom I came.

“ And then we lit a fire, and sacrificed, 260  
And ate the cheeses, and within the cave  
Sat waiting, till from pasturing his flocks  
He came ; a heavy load of well-dried wood  
He bore, to make a blaze at supper-time.  
Without the den he flung his burden down 265  
With such a crash that we in terror slunk  
Into a corner of the cave. He drove  
His well-fed flock, all those whose milk he drew,  
Under that spacious vault of rock, but left  
The males, both goats and rams, without the court. 270  
And then he lifted a huge barrier up,  
A mighty weight ; not two-and-twenty wains,  
Four-wheeled and strong, could move it from the  
ground :

Such was the enormous rock he raised, and placed  
Against the entrance. Then he sat and milked 275  
The ewes and bleating goats, each one in turn,  
And gave to each its young. Next, half the milk  
He caused to curdle, and disposed the curd  
In woven baskets ; and the other half

He kept in bowls to be his evening drink. 280

His tasks all ended thus, he lit a fire,

And saw us where we lurked, and questioned us : —

“ ‘ Who are ye, strangers? Tell me whence ye  
came

Across the ocean. Are ye men of trade,

Or wanderers at will, like those who roam 285

The sea for plunder, and, with their own lives

In peril, carry death to distant shores? ’

“ He spake, and we who heard with sinking hearts  
Trembled at that deep voice and frightful form,

And thus I answered : ‘ We are Greeks who come 290

From Ilium, driven across the mighty deep

By changing winds, and while we sought our home

Have made a different voyage, and been forced

Upon another course ; such was the will

Of Jupiter. We boast ourselves to be 295

Soldiers of Agamemnon, Atreus’ son,

Whose fame is now the greatest under heaven,

So mighty was the city which he sacked,

So many were the warriors whom he slew ;

And now we come as suppliants to thy knees, 300

And ask thee to receive us as thy guests,

Or else bestow the gifts which custom makes

The stranger’s due. Great as thou art, revere

The gods ; for suitors to thy grace are we,

And hospitable Jove, whose presence goes 305

With every worthy stranger, will avenge

Suppliants and strangers when they suffer wrong.’

“I spake, and savagely he answered me : —  
‘Thou art a fool, O stranger, or art come  
From some far country, — thou who biddest me 310  
Fear or regard the gods. We little care —  
We Cyclops — for the Ægis-bearer, Jove,  
Or any other of the blessed gods ;  
We are their betters. Think not I would spare  
Thee or thy comrades to avoid the wrath 315  
Of Jupiter, unless it were my choice ;  
But say, — for I would know, — where hast thou left  
Thy gallant bark in landing ? was it near,  
Or in some distant corner of the isle ?’

“He spake to tempt me, but I well perceived 320  
His craft, and answered with dissembling words : —

“‘Neptune, who shakes the shores, hath wrecked  
my bark

On rocks that edge thine island, hurling it  
Against the headland. From the open sea  
The tempest swept it hitherward, and I, 325  
With these, escaped the bitter doom of death.’

“I spake ; the savage answered not, but sprang,  
And, laying hands on my companions, seized  
Two, whom he dashed like whelps against the  
ground.

Their brains flowed out, and weltered where they fell.  
He hewed them limb from limb for his repast, 331  
And, like a lion of the mountain wilds,  
Devoured them as they were, and left no part, —  
Entrails nor flesh nor marrowy bones. We wept

To see his cruelties, and raised our hands 335  
To Jove, and hopeless misery filled our hearts.  
And when the Cyclops now had filled himself,  
Devouring human flesh, and drinking milk  
Unmingled, in his cave he laid him down,  
Stretched out amid his flocks. The thought arose 340  
In my courageous heart to go to him,  
And draw the trenchant sword upon my thigh,  
And where the midriff joins the liver deal  
A stroke to pierce his breast. A second thought  
Restrained me, — that a miserable death 345  
Would overtake us, since we had no power  
To move the mighty rock which he had laid  
At the high opening. So all night we grieved,  
Waiting the holy Morn ; and when at length  
That rosy-fingered daughter of the Dawn 350  
Appeared, the Cyclops lit a fire, and milked  
His fair flock one by one, and brought their young  
Each to its mother's side. When he had thus  
Performed his household tasks, he seized again  
Two of our number for his morning meal. 355  
These he devoured, and then he moved away  
With ease the massive rock that closed the cave,  
And, driving forth his well-fed flock, he laid  
The massive barrier back, as one would fit  
The lid upon a quiver. With loud noise 360  
The Cyclops drove that well-fed flock afield,  
While I was left to think of many a plan  
To do him mischief and avenge our wrongs,

If haply Pallas should confer on me  
That glory. To my mind, as I revolved 365  
The plans, this seemed the wisest of them all.

“Beside the stalls there lay a massive club  
Of olive-wood, yet green, which from its stock  
The Cyclops hewed; that he might carry it  
When seasoned. As it lay it seemed to us 370  
The mast of some black galley, broad of beam,  
With twenty oarsmen, built to carry freight  
Across the mighty deep, — such was its length  
And thickness. Standing by it, I cut off  
A fathom’s length, and gave it to my men, 375  
And bade them smooth its sides, and they obeyed  
While I made sharp the smaller end, and brought  
The point to hardness in the glowing fire ;  
And then I hid the weapon in a heap  
Of litter, which lay thick about the cave. 380

I bade my comrades now decide by lot  
Which of them all should dare, along with me,  
To lift the stake, and with its point bore out  
Our enemy’s eye, when softly wrapped in sleep.  
The lot was cast, and fell on those whom most 385  
I wished with me, — four men, and I the fifth.

“At eve the keeper of these fair-woolled flocks  
Returned, and brought his well-fed sheep and goats  
Into the spacious cavern, leaving none  
Without it, whether through some doubt of us 390  
Or through the ordering of some god. He raised  
The massive rock again, and laid it close

Against the opening. Then he sat and milked  
The ewes and bleating goats, each one in turn,  
And gave to each her young. When he had thus 395  
Performed his household tasks, he seized again  
Two of our number for his evening meal.

Then drew I near, and bearing in my hand  
A wooden cup of dark red wine I said:—

“ ‘ Take this, O Cyclops, after thy repast 400  
Of human flesh, and drink, that thou mayst know  
What liquor was concealed within our ship.

I brought it as an offering to thee,  
For I had hope that thou wouldst pity us,  
And send us home. Yet are thy cruelties 405  
Beyond all limit. Wicked as thou art,

Hereafter who, of all the human race,  
Will dare approach thee, guilty of such wrong ? ’

“ As thus I spake, he took the cup and drank.  
The luscious wine delighted mightily 410  
His palate, and he asked a second draught.

“ ‘ Give me to drink again, and generously,  
And tell thy name, that I may make a gift  
Such as becomes a host. The fertile land  
In which the Cyclops dwell yields wine, ’t is true, 415  
And the large grapes are nursed by rains from Jove,  
But nectar and ambrosia are in this.’

“ He spake ; I gave him of the generous juice  
Again, and thrice I filled and brought the cup,  
And thrice the Cyclops in his folly drank. 420  
But when I saw the wine begin to cloud

His senses, I bespake him blandly thus :—

“ ‘Thou hast inquired, O Cyclops, by what name  
Men know me. I will tell thee, but do thou  
Bestow in turn some hospitable gift, 425  
As thou hast promised. Noman is my name,  
My father and my mother gave it me,  
And Noman am I called by all my friends.’

“I ended, and he answered savagely :—  
‘Noman shall be the last of all his band 430  
Whom I will eat, the rest will I devour  
Before him. Let that respite be my gift.’

“He spake, and, sinking backward at full length,  
Lay on the ground, with his huge neck aside ;  
All-powerful sleep had overtaken him. 435

Then from his mouth came bits of human flesh  
Mingled with wine, and from his drunken throat  
Rejected noisily. I put the stake  
Among the glowing coals to gather heat,  
And uttered cheerful words, encouraging 440

My men, that none might fail me through their fears.  
And when the olive-wood began to blaze, —  
For though yet green it freely took the fire, —  
I drew it from the embers. Round me stood  
My comrades, whom some deity inspired 445  
With calm, high courage. In their hands they took  
And thrust into his eye the pointed bar,  
While perched upon a higher stand than they  
I twirled it round. As when a workman bores  
Some timber of a ship, the men who stand 450

Below him with a strap, on either side  
Twirl it, and round it spins unceasingly,  
So, thrusting in his eye that pointed bar,  
We made it turn. The blood came streaming forth  
On the hot wood ; the eyelids and the brow 455  
Were scalded by the vapor, and the roots  
Of the scorched eyeball crackled with the fire.  
As when a smith, in forging axe or adze,  
Plunges, to temper it, the hissing blade  
Into cold water, strengthening thus the steel, 460  
So hissed the eyeball of the Cyclops round  
That olive stake. He raised a fearful howl ;  
The rocks rang with it, and we fled from him  
In terror. Plucking from his eye the stake  
All foul and dripping with the abundant blood, 465  
He flung it madly from him with both hands.  
Then called he to the Cyclops who in grot  
Dwelt on that breezy height. They heard his  
voice

And came by various ways, and stood beside  
The cave, and asked the occasion of his grief. 470

“ ‘ What hurts thee, Polyphemus, that thou thus  
Dost break our slumbers in the ambrosial night  
With cries ? Hath any of the sons of men  
Driven off thy flocks in spite of thee, or tried  
By treachery or force to take thy life ? ’ 475

“ Huge Polyphemus answered from his den : —  
‘ O friends ! ’ t is Noman who is killing me ;  
By treachery Noman kills me ; none by force.’



“Then thus with winged words they spake again :—  
 ‘ If no man does thee violence, and thou 483  
 Art quite alone, reflect that none escape  
 Diseases ; they are sent by Jove. But make  
 Thy prayer to Father Neptune, ocean’s king.’

“So spake they and departed. In my heart  
 I laughed to think that by the name I took, 485  
 And by my shrewd device, I had deceived  
 The Cyclops. Meantime, groaning and in pain,  
 And groping with his hands, he moved away  
 The rock that barred the entrance. There he sat,  
 With arms outstretched, to seize whoever sought 490  
 To issue from the cavern with the flock,  
 So dull of thought he deemed me. Then I planned  
 How best to save my comrades and myself  
 From death. I framed a thousand stratagems  
 And arts, — for here was life at stake, and great 495  
 The danger was. At last I fixed on this.

“The rams were plump and beautiful, and large  
 With thick dark fleeces. These I silently  
 Bound to each other, three and three, with twigs  
 Of which that prodigy of lawless guilt, 500  
 The Cyclops, made his bed. The middle ram  
 Of every three conveyed a man ; the two,  
 One on each side, were there to make him safe.  
 Thus each of us was borne by three ; but I  
 Chose for myself the finest one of all, 505  
 And seized him by the back, and, slipping down  
 Beneath his shaggy belly, stretched myself

At length, and clung with resolute heart, and hands  
That firmly clenched the rich abundant fleece.

Then sighed we for the holy Morn to rise. 510

“ And when again the daughter of the Dawn,  
The rosy-fingered Morn, looked forth, the males  
Went forth to pasture, while the ewes remained  
Within the stables, bleating, yet unmilked,  
For heavy were their udders. Carefully 515  
The master handled, though in grievous pain,  
The back of every one that rose and passed,  
Yet, slow of thought, perceived not that my men  
Were clinging hid beneath their woolly breasts.

As the last ram of all the flock went out, 520

His thick fleece heavy with my weight, and I

In agitated thought, he felt his back,

And thus the giant Polyphemus spake : —

“ ‘ My favorite ram, how art thou now the last  
To leave the cave? It hath not been thy wont 525

To let the sheep go first, but thou didst come

Earliest to feed among the flowery grass,

Walking with stately strides, and thou wert first

At the fresh stream, and first at eve to seek

The stable ; now thou art the last of all. 530

Grievest thou for thy master, who has lost

His eye, put out by a deceitful wretch

And his vile crew, who stupefied me first

With wine, — this Noman, — who, if right I deem,

Has not escaped from death. O, didst thou think 535

As I do, and hadst but the power of speech

To tell me where he hides from my strong arm,  
Then should his brains, dashed out against the ground,  
Be scattered here and there ; then should my heart  
Be somewhat lighter, even amid the woes 540  
Which Noman, worthless wretch, has brought on  
me !’

“ He spake, and sent him forth among the rest ;  
And when we were a little way beyond  
The cavern and the court, I loosed my hold  
Upon the animal and unbound my men. 545  
Then quickly we surrounded and drove off,  
Fat sheep and stately paced, a numerous flock,  
And brought them to our ship, where joyfully  
Our friends received us, though with grief and tears  
For those who perished. Yet I suffered not 550  
That they should weep, but, frowning, gave command  
By signs to lift with speed the fair-woolled sheep  
On board, and launch our ship on the salt sea.  
They went on board, where each one took his  
place

Upon the benches, and with diligent oars 555  
Smote the gray deep ; and when we were as far  
As one upon the shore could hear a shout,  
Thus to the Cyclops tauntingly I called :—

“ ‘ Ha ! Cyclops ! those whom in thy rocky cave  
Thou, in thy brutal fury, hast devoured, 560  
Were friends of one not unexpert in war ;  
Amplly have thy own guilty deeds returned  
Upon thee. Cruel one ! who didst not fear

To eat the strangers sheltered by thy roof,  
Jove and the other gods avenge them thus.' 565

"I spake; the anger in his bosom raged  
More fiercely. From a mountain peak he wrenched  
Its summit, hurling it to fall beside  
Our galley, where it almost touched the helm.  
The rock dashed high the water where it fell, 570  
And the returning billow swept us back  
And toward the shore. I seized a long-stemmed pike  
And pushed it from the shore, encouraging  
The men to bend with vigor to their oars  
And so escape. With nods I gave the sign. 575  
Forward to vigorous strokes the oarsmen leaned  
Till we were out at sea as far from land  
As when I spake before, and then again  
I shouted to the Cyclops, though my crew  
Strove to prevent it with beseeching words, 580  
And one man first and then another said:—

"O most unwise! why chafe that savage man  
To fury, — him who just has cast his bolt  
Into the sea, and forced us toward the land  
Where we had wellnigh perished? Should he hear 585  
A cry from us, or even a word of speech,  
Then would he fling a rock to crush our heads  
And wreck our ship, so fatal is his cast.'

"He spake, but moved not my courageous heart;  
And then I spake again, and angrily: — 590

"Cyclops, if any man of mortal birth  
Note thine unseemly blindness, and inquire

The occasion, tell him that Laertes' son,  
 Ulysses, the destroyer of walled towns,  
 Whose home is Ithaca, put out thine eye.' 595

"I spake ; he answered with a wailing voice : —  
 'Now, woe is me ! the ancient oracles  
 Concerning me have come to pass. Here dwelt  
 A seer named Telemus Eurymides,  
 Great, good, and eminent in prophecy, 600  
 And prophesying he grew old among  
 The Cyclops. He foretold my coming fate, —  
 That I should lose my sight, and by the hand  
 And cunning of Ulysses. Yet I looked  
 For one of noble presence, mighty strength, 605  
 And giant stature landing on our coast.  
 Now a mere weakling, insignificant  
 And small of stature, has put out my eye,  
 First stupefying me with wine. Yet come  
 Hither, I pray, Ulysses, and receive 610  
 The hospitable gifts which are thy due ;  
 And I will pray to Neptune, and entreat  
 The mighty god to guide thee safely home.  
 His son am I, and he declares himself  
 My father. He can heal me if he will, 615  
 And no one else of all the immortal gods  
 Or mortal men can give me back my sight.'

"He spake ; I answered : 'Rather would I take  
 Thy life and breath, and send thee to the abode  
 Of Hades, where thou wouldst be past the power 620  
 Of even Neptune to restore thine eye.'

“As thus I said, the Cyclops raised his hands,  
And spread them toward the starry heaven, and thus  
Prayed to the deity who rules the deep:—

“‘Hear, dark-haired Neptune, who dost swathe  
the earth! 625

If I am thine, and thou dost own thyself  
My father, grant that this Ulysses ne’er  
May reach his native land! But if it be  
The will of fate that he behold again  
His friends, and enter his own palace-halls 630  
In his own country, late and sorrowful  
Be his return, with all his comrades lost,  
And in a borrowed ship, and may he find  
In his own home new griefs awaiting him.’

“He prayed, and Neptune hearkened to his  
prayer. 635

And then the Cyclops seized another stone,  
Far larger than the last, and swung it round,  
And cast it with vast strength. It fell behind  
Our black-prowed galley, where it almost struck  
The rudder’s end. The sea was dashed on high 640  
Beneath the falling rock, and bore our ship  
On toward the shore we sought. When we reached  
The island where together in a fleet  
Our other galleys lay, we found our friends  
Sitting where they had waited long in grief. 645  
We touched the shore and drew our galley up  
On the smooth sand, and stepped upon the beach;  
And taking from on board the sheep that formed

Part of the Cyclops' flock, divided them,  
 That none might be without an equal share. 650  
 When all the rest were shared, my warrior friends  
 Decreed the ram to me. Of him I made  
 Upon the beach a sacrifice to Jove  
 The Cloud-compeller, Saturn's son, whose rule  
 Is over all ; to him I burned the thighs. 655  
 He heeded not the offering ; even then  
 He planned the wreck of all my gallant ships,  
 And death of my dear comrades. All that day  
 Till set of sun we sat and feasted high  
 Upon the abundant meats and delicate wine. 660  
 But when the sun went down, and darkness crept  
 Over the earth, we slumbered on the shore ;  
 And when again the daughter of the Dawn,  
 The rosy-fingered Morn, looked forth, I called  
 My men with cheerful words to climb the decks 665  
 And cast the hawsers loose. With speed they went  
 On board and manned the benches, took in hand  
 The oars and smote with them the hoary deep.  
 Onward in sadness, glad to have escaped,  
 We sailed, yet sorrowing for our comrades lost." 670

## BOOK X.

“WE reached the Æolian isle, where Æolus,  
 Dear to the gods, a son of Hippotas,  
 Made his abode. It was a floating isle ;

A wall of brass enclosed it, and smooth rocks  
Edged it around. Twelve children in his halls 5  
Were born, six daughters and six blooming sons ;  
He gave his daughters to his sons for wives,  
And they with their dear father and his queen  
Banquet from day to day, with endless change  
Of meats before them. In his halls all day 10  
The sound of pipes is in the perfumed air ;  
At night the youths beside their modest wives  
Sleep on fair couches spread with tapestry.  
So coming to his town and fair abode,  
I found a friendly welcome. One full month 15  
The monarch kept me with him, and inquired  
Of all that might concern the fate of Troy,  
The Argive fleet, and the return to Greece,  
And just as it befell I told him all.  
And when I spake to him of going thence, 20  
And prayed him to dismiss me, he complied,  
And helped to make us ready for the sea.  
The bladder of a bullock nine years old  
He gave, in which he had compressed and bound  
The stormy winds of air ; for Saturn's son 25  
Had given him empire o'er the winds, with power  
To calm them or to rouse them at his will.  
This in our roomy galley he made fast  
With a bright chain of silver, that no breath  
Of ruder air might blow. He only left 30  
The west wind free to waft our ships and us  
Upon our way. But that was not to be ;



We perished by a folly of our own.

“Nine days we held our way, both day and night ;  
And now appeared in sight our native fields       35  
On the tenth night, where on the shore we saw  
Men kindling fires. Meantime a pleasant sleep  
Had overcome my weary limbs, for long  
Had I been guiding with incessant toil  
The rudder, nor would trust it to the hand       40  
Of any other, such was my desire  
To reach our country by the shortest way.  
Then talked my crew among themselves, and said  
That I had brought with me from Æolus,  
The large-souled son of Hippotas, rich gifts       45  
Of gold and silver. Standing side by side  
And looking at each other, thus they said :—

“‘How wonderfully is our chief revered  
And loved by all men, wander where he will  
Into what realm soever ! From the coast       50  
Of Troy he sailed with many precious things,  
His share of spoil, while we, who with him went  
And with him came, are empty-handed yet ;  
And now hath Æolus, to show how much  
He prizes him, bestowed the treasures here.       55  
Come, let us see them ; let us know how much  
Of gold and silver is concealed in this.’

“Thus speaking to each other, they obeyed  
The evil counsel. They untied the sack,  
And straight the winds rushed forth and seized the  
ship,       60

And swept the crews, lamenting bitterly,  
Far from their country out upon the deep ;  
And then I woke, and in my noble mind  
Bethought me whether I should drop at once

Into the deep and perish, or remain 65

And silently endure and keep my place  
Among the living. I remained, endured,  
And covered with my mantle lay within  
My galley, while the furious whirlwind bore  
Back to the Æolian isle our groaning crews. 70

“ We landed on the coast, and to our barks  
Brought water. Then my men prepared a meal  
Beside the fleet ; and having tasted food  
And wine, I took a herald and a friend,  
And, hastening to the sumptuous palace-halls 75  
Of Æolus, I found him with his wife  
And children banqueting. We sat us down  
Upon the threshold at the palace-doors,  
And they were all astonished, and inquired : —

“ ‘ Why art thou here ? What god thine enemy 80  
Pursues thee, O Ulysses ! whom we sent  
So well prepared to reach thy native land,  
Thy home, or any place that pleased thee most ? ’

“ They spake, and sorrowfully I replied : —  
‘ The fault is all with my unthinking crew 85  
And my own luckless slumber. Yet, my friends,  
Repair the mischief, for ye have the power.’

“ Thus with submissive words I spake, but they  
Sat mute, the father only answered me : —

“ ‘Hence with thee ! Leave our island instantly, 91  
Vilest of living men ! It may not be  
That I receive or aid as he departs  
One who is hated by the blessed gods, —  
And thou art hated by the gods. Away !’

“He spake, and sent us from the palace-door 95  
Lamenting. Sorrowfully went we on.  
And now with rowing hard and long, — the fruit  
Of our own folly, — all our crews lost heart,  
And every hope of safe return was gone.

“Six days and nights we sailed ; the seventh we  
came 100

To lofty Læstrigoni with wide gates,  
The city of Lamos, where, on going forth,  
The shepherd calls to shepherd entering in.  
There might a man who never yields to sleep  
Earn double wages, first in pasturing herds, 105  
And then in tending sheep ; for there the fields  
Grazed in the daytime are by others grazed  
At night. We reached its noble haven, girt  
By towering rocks that rise on every side,  
And the bold shores run out to form its mouth, — 110  
A narrow entrance. There the other crews  
Stationed their barks, and moored them close beside  
Each other, in that hill-encircled port.  
No billow, even the smallest, rises there ;  
The water glimmers with perpetual calm. 115  
I only kept my dark-hulled ship without,  
And bound its cable to a jutting rock.

“ I climbed a rugged headland, and looked forth.  
No marks of tilth appeared, the work of men  
Or oxen, only smokes that from below 120  
Rose in the air. And then I sent forth scouts  
To learn what race of men who live by bread  
Inhabited the land. Two chosen men  
I sent, a herald made the third ; and these  
Went inland by a level path, on which 125  
The wains brought fuel from the woody heights  
Into the city. On their way they met,  
Before the town, a damsel with an ewer, —  
The stately daughter of Antiphates,  
The Læstrigonian, who was coming down 130  
To where Artacia’s smoothly flowing fount  
Gave water for the city. They drew near  
And spake, and asked her who was sovereign there,  
And who his people. Straight she pointed out  
A lofty pile in which her father dwelt. 135  
They entered that proud palace, and beheld,  
Tall as a mountain peak, the monarch’s wife,  
And shuddered at the sight. With eager haste  
She called her husband, King Antiphates,  
From council. With a murderous intent 140  
He came, and, seizing one of my poor friends,  
Devoured him, while the other two betook  
Themselves to sudden flight and reached the ships.  
And then he raised a fearful yell that rang  
Through all the city. The strong Læstrigons 145  
Rushed forth by thousands from all sides, more like

To giants than to common men. They hurled  
Stones of enormous weight from cliffs above,  
And cries of those who perished and the crash  
Of shattered galleys rose. They speared our  
friends

130

Like fishes for their horrid feasts, and thus  
Bore them away. While those within the port  
Were slaughtered, drawing my good sword I cut  
The hawsers fastened to my ship's blue prow,  
And cheered my men, and bade them fling them-  
selves

135

Upon the oars, that so we might escape  
Our threatened fate. They heard, and plied their oars  
Like men who rowed for life. The galley shot  
Forth from these beetling rocks into the sea  
Full gladly ; all the others perished there.

150

“ Onward we sailed, with sorrow in our hearts  
For our lost friends, though glad to be reprieved  
From death. And now we landed at an isle,—  
Ææa, where the fair-haired Circè dwelt,  
A goddess high in rank and skilled in song,  
Own sister of the wise Æætes. Both  
Were children of the source of light, the Sun,  
And Persè, Ocean's daughter, brought them forth.  
We found a haven here, where ships might lie ;  
And guided by some deity we brought  
Our galley silently against the shore,  
And disembarked, and gave two days and nights  
To rest, unmanned with hardship and with grief.

165

170

“When bright-haired Morning brought the third  
day round,  
I took my spear and my good sword, and left 175  
The ship, and climbed a height, in hope to spy  
Some trace of human toil, or hear some voice.  
On a steep precipice I stood, and saw  
From the broad earth below a rising smoke,  
Where midst the thickets and the forest-ground 180  
Stood Circè's palace. Seeing that dark smoke,  
The thought arose within my mind that there  
I should inquire. I pondered till at last  
This seemed the wisest, — to return at once  
To my good ship upon the ocean-side, 185  
And give my crew their meal, and send them forth  
To view the region. Coming to the spot  
Where lay my well-oared bark, some pitying god  
Beneath whose eye I wandered forth alone  
Sent a huge stag into my very path, 190  
High-horned, which from his pasture in the wood  
Descended to the river-side to drink,  
For grievously he felt the hot sun's power.  
Him as he ran I smote ; the weapon pierced,  
Just at the spine, the middle of his back. 195  
The brazen blade passed through, and with a moan  
He fell amid the dust, and yielded up  
His life. I went to him, and set my foot  
Against him, and plucked forth the brazen spear,  
And left it leaning there. And then I broke 200  
Lithe osiers from the shrubs, and twined of these

A rope, which, doubled, was an ell in length.  
With that I tied the enormous creature's feet,  
And slung him on my neck, and brought him thus  
To my black ship. I used the spear to prop 205  
My steps, since he no longer could be borne  
Upon the shoulder, aided by the hand,  
Such was the animal's bulk. I flung him down  
Before the ship, encouraging my men  
With cheerful words, and thus I said to each : — 210

“ ‘ My friends, we will not, wretched as we are,  
Go down to Pluto's realm before our time.  
While food and wine are yet within the hold  
Of our good galley, let us not forget  
Our daily meals, and famine-stricken pine.’ 215

“ I spake ; they all obeyed, and at my word  
Came forth, and standing by the barren deep  
Admired the stag, for he was huge of bulk ;  
And when their eyes were tired with wondering,  
My people washed their hands, and soon had made 220  
A noble banquet ready. All that day  
Till set of sun we sat and feasted there  
Upon the abundant meat and delicate wine ;  
And when the sun went down, and darkness came,  
We slept upon the shore. But when the Morn, 225  
The rosy-fingered child of Dawn, looked forth,  
I called a council of my men and spake : —

“ ‘ Give ear, my friends, amid your sufferings,  
To words that I shall say. We cannot here  
Know which way lies the west, nor where the east, 230

Nor where the sun, that shines for all mankind,  
Descends below the earth, nor where again  
He rises from it. Yet will we consult,  
If room there be for counsel, — which I doubt,  
For when I climbed that height I overlooked 235  
An isle surrounded by the boundless deep, —  
An isle low lying. In the midst I saw  
Smoke rising from a thicket of the wood.’

“ I spake ; their courage died within their hearts  
As they remembered what Antiphates, 240  
The Læstrigon, had done, and what foul deeds  
The cannibal Cyclops, and they wept aloud.  
Tears flowed abundantly, but tears were now  
Of no avail to our unhappy band.

“ Numbering my well-armed men, I made of  
them 245

Two equal parties, giving each its chief.  
Myself commanded one ; Eurylochus,  
The hero, took the other in his charge.

“ Then in a brazen helm we shook the lots ;  
The lot of brave Eurylochus leaped forth, 250  
And he with two-and-twenty of our men  
Went forward with quick steps, and yet in tears,  
While we as sorrowful were left behind.

“ They found the fair abode where Circè dwelt,  
A palace of hewn stone within the vale, 255  
Yet nobly seated. There were mountain wolves  
And lions round it, which herself had tamed  
With powerful drugs ; yet these assaulted not



The visitors, but, wagging their long tails,  
 Stood on their hinder feet, and fawned on them, <sup>260</sup>  
 Like mastiffs on their master when he comes  
 From banqueting and brings them food. So fawned  
 The strong-clawed wolves and lions on my mén.  
 With fear my men beheld those beasts of prey,  
 Yet went, and, standing in the portico <sup>265</sup>  
 Of the bright-haired divinity, they heard  
 Her sweet voice singing, as within she threw  
 The shuttle through the wide immortal web,  
 Such as is woven by the goddesses,—  
 Delicate, bright of hue, and beautiful. <sup>270</sup>

“Polites then, a chief the most beloved  
 And most discreet of all my comrades, spake :—  
 “‘Some one is here, my friends, who sweetly sings,  
 Weaving an ample web, and all the floor  
 Rings to her voice. Whoever she may be, <sup>275</sup>  
 Woman or goddess, let us call to her.’

“He spake ; aloud they called, and forth she came  
 And threw at once the shining doors apart,  
 And bade my comrades enter. Without thought  
 They followed her. Eurylochus alone <sup>280</sup>  
 Remained without, for he suspected guile.  
 She led them in and seated them on thrones.  
 Then mingling for them Pramnian wine with cheese,  
 Meal, and fresh honey, and infusing drugs  
 Into the mixture, — drugs which made them lose <sup>285</sup>  
 The memory of their home, — she handed them  
 The beverage and they drank. Then instantly

She touched them with a wand, and shut them up  
In sties, transformed to swine in head and voice,  
Bristles and shape, though still the human mind 290  
Remained to them. Thus sorrowing they were driven  
Into their cells, where Circè flung to them  
Acorns of oak and ilex, and the fruit  
Of cornel, such as nourish wallowing swine.

“ Back came Eurylochus to our good ship 295  
With news of our poor comrades and their fate,  
He strove to speak, but could not ; he was stunned  
By that calamity ; his eyes were filled  
With tears, and his whole soul was given to grief.  
We marvelled greatly ; long we questioned him, 300  
And thus he spake of our lost friends at last : —

“ ‘ Through yonder thickets, as thou gav’st com-  
mand,  
Illustrious chief ! we went, until we reached  
A stately palace of hewn stones, within  
A vale, yet nobly seated. Some one there, 305  
Goddess or woman, weaving busily  
An ample web, sang sweetly as she wrought.  
My comrades called aloud, and forth she came,  
And threw at once the shining doors apart,  
And bade us enter. Without thought the rest 310  
Followed, while I alone, suspecting guile,  
Remained without. My comrades, from that hour,  
Were seen no more ; not one of them again  
Came forth, though long I sat and watched for them.’

“ He spake ; I slung my silver-studded sword 315

Upon my shoulders, — a huge blade of brass, —  
And my bow with it, and commanded him  
To lead the way. He seized and clasped my knees  
With both his hands in attitude of prayer,  
And sorrowfully said these winged words : — 320

“ ‘Take me not thither ; force me not to go,  
O foster-child of Jove ! but leave me here ;  
For thou wilt not return, I know, nor yet  
Deliver one of our lost friends. Our part  
Is to betake ourselves to instant flight 325  
With these who yet remain, and so escape.’

“ He spake, and I replied : ‘ Eurylochus,  
Remain thou here, beside our roomy ship,  
Eating and drinking. I shall surely go.  
A strong necessity is laid on me.’ 330

“ I spake, and from the ship and shore went up  
Into the isle ; and when I found myself  
Within that awful valley, and not far  
From the great palace in which Circè dwelt,  
The sorceress, there met me on my way 335  
A youth ; he seemed in manhood’s early prime,  
When youth has most of grace. He took my hand  
And held it, and, accosting me, began : —

“ ‘Rash mortal ! whither art thou wandering thus  
Alone among the hills, where every place 340  
Is strange to thee ? Thy comrades are shut up  
In Circè’s palace in close cells like swine.  
Com’st thou to set them free ? Nay, thou like them  
Wilt rather find thyself constrained to stay.

Let me bestow the means to make thee safe 345  
Against that mischief. Take this potent herb,  
And bear it with thee to the palace-halls  
Of Circè, and it shall avert from thee  
The threatened evil. I will now reveal  
The treacherous arts of Circè. She will bring 350  
A mingled draught to thee, and drug the bowl,  
But will not harm thee thus ; the virtuous plant  
I gave thee will prevent it. Hear yet more :  
When she shall smite thee with her wand, draw forth  
Thy good sword from thy thigh and rush at her 355  
As if to take her life, and she will crouch  
In fear, and will solicit thine embrace.  
Refuse her not, that so she may release  
Thy comrades, and may send thee also back  
To thine own land ; but first exact of her 360  
The solemn oath which binds the blessed gods,  
That she will meditate no other harm  
To thee, nor strip thee of thy manly strength.'

"The Argus-queller spake, and plucked from earth  
The potent plant and handed it to me, 365  
And taught me all its powers. The root is black,  
The blossom white as milk. Among the gods  
Its name is Moly ; hard it is for men  
To dig it up ; the gods find nothing hard.

"Back through the woody island Hermes went 370  
Toward high Olympus, while I took my way  
To Circè's halls, yet with a beating heart.  
There, as I stood beneath the portico

Of that bright-haired divinity, I called  
Aloud ; the goddess heard my voice and came, 375  
And threw at once the shining doors apart,  
And prayed me to come in. I followed her,  
Yet grieving still. She led me in and gave  
A seat upon a silver-studded throne,  
Beautiful, nobly wrought, and placed beneath 380  
A footstool, and prepared a mingled draught  
Within a golden chalice, and infused  
A drug with mischievous intent. She gave  
The cup ; I drank it off ; the charm wrought not,  
And then she smote me with her wand and said : — 385  
‘ Go to the sty, and with thy fellows sprawl.’

“She spake ; but drawing forth the trusty sword  
Upon my thigh, I rushed at her as if  
To take her life. She shrieked and, stooping low,  
Ran underneath my arm and clasped my knees, 390  
And uttered piteously these winged words : —

“ ‘ Who art thou ? of what race and of what land,  
And who thy parents ? I am wonder-struck  
To see that thou couldst drink that magic juice  
And yield not to its power. No living man, 395  
Whoever he might be, that tasted once  
Those drugs, or passed them o’er his lips, has yet  
Withstood them. In thy breast a spirit dwells  
Not to be thus subdued. Art thou not then  
Ulysses, master of wise stratagems, 400  
Whose coming hither, on his way from Troy,  
In his black galley, oft has been foretold

By Hermes of the golden wand? But sheathe  
Thy sword and share my couch, that, joined in love,  
Each may hereafter trust the other's faith.' 405

"She spake, and I replied: 'How canst thou ask,  
O Circè, that I gently deal with thee,  
Since thou, in thine own palace, hast transformed  
My friends to swine, and plottest even now  
To keep me with thee, luring me to pass 410  
Into thy chamber and to share thy couch,  
That thou mayst strip me of my manly strength  
I come not to thy couch till thou engage,  
O goddess, by a solemn oath, that thou  
Wilt never seek to do me further harm.' 415

"I spake; she straightway took the oath required,  
And, after it was uttered and confirmed,  
Up to her sumptuous couch I went. Meanwhile  
Four diligent maidens ministered within  
The palace, — servants of the household they, 420  
Who had their birth from fountains and from groves,  
And sacred rivers flowing to the sea.  
One spread the thrones with gorgeous coverings;  
Above was purple arras, and beneath  
Were linen webs; another, setting forth 425  
The silver tables just before the thrones,  
Placed on them canisters of gold; a third  
Mingled the rich wines in a silver bowl,  
And placed the golden cups; and, last, the fourth  
Brought water from the fountain, and beneath 430  
A massive tripod kindled a great fire

And warmed the water. When it boiled within  
The shining brass, she led me to the bath,  
And washed me from the tripod. On my head  
And shoulders pleasantly she shed the streams 433  
That from my members took away the sense  
Of weariness, unmanning body and mind.  
And when she thus had bathed me and with oil  
Anointed me, she put a princely cloak  
And tunic on me, led me in, and showed 440  
My seat, — a stately silver-studded throne,  
High-wrought, — and placed a footstool for my feet.  
Then came a handmaid with a golden ewer,  
And from it poured pure water for my hands  
Into a silver laver. Next she placed 445  
A polished table near to me, on which  
The matron of the palace laid the feast,  
With many delicacies from her store,  
And bade me eat. The banquet pleased me not.  
My thoughts were elsewhere ; dark imaginings 450  
Were in my mind. When Circè marked my mood,  
As in a gloomy revery I sat,  
And put not forth my hands to touch the feast,  
She came to me and spake these winged words :—  
“ ‘Why sittest thou like one who has no power 455  
Of speech, Ulysses, wrapt in thoughts that gnaw  
Thy heart, and tasting neither food nor wine?  
Still dost thou dream of fraud? It is not well  
That thou shouldst fear it longer, since I pledged  
Myself against it with a mighty oath.’ 460

“She spake, and I replied : ‘What man whose  
heart

Is faithful could endure to taste of food  
Or wine till he should see his captive friends  
Once more at large? If with a kind intent  
Thou bidst me eat and drink, let me behold 463  
With mine own eyes my dear companions free.’

“I spake ; and Circè took her wand and went  
Forth from her halls, and, opening the gate  
That closed the sty, drove forth what seemed a herd  
Of swine in their ninth year. They ranged them-  
selves 470

Before her, and she went from each to each  
And shed on them another drug. Forthwith  
Fell from their limbs the bristles which had grown  
All over them, when mighty Circè gave  
At first the baleful potion. Now again 475  
My friends were men, and younger than before,  
And of a nobler mien and statelier growth.  
They knew me all ; and each one pressed my hand  
In his, and there were tears and sobs of joy  
That sounded through the palace. Circè too 480  
Was moved, the mighty goddess ; she drew near  
And stood by me, and spake these winged words :—

“‘Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
Ulysses ! go to thy good ship beside  
The sea and draw it up the beach, and hide 485  
The goods and weapons in the caverns there,  
And come thou back and bring with thee thy friends.’



“She spake, and easily my generous mind  
 Was moved by what she said. Forthwith I went  
 To my good ship beside the sea, and found 495  
 My friends in tears, lamenting bitterly.  
 As in some grange the calves come leaping round  
 A herd of kine returning to the stall  
 From grassy fields where they have grazed their fill,  
 Nor can the stall contain the young which spring 495  
 Around their mothers with continual bleat ;  
 So when my comrades saw me through their tears,  
 They sprang to meet me, and their joy was such  
 As if they were in their own native land  
 And their own city, on the rugged coast 500  
 Of Ithaca, where they were born and reared ;  
 And as they wept they spake these winged words : —

“‘O foster-child of Jove ! we welcome thee  
 On thy return with a delight as great  
 As if we all had reached again the land 505  
 That gave us birth, our Ithaca. And now  
 Tell by what death our other friends have died.’

“They spake ; I answered with consoling  
 words : —

‘First draw our galley up the beach, and hide  
 Our goods and all our weapons in the caves, 510  
 And then let all make haste to follow me,  
 And see our friends in Circè’s sacred halls,  
 Eating and drinking at the plenteous board.’

“I spake ; and cheerfully my men obeyed,  
 Save that Eurylochus alone essayed 515

To hold them back, and spake these winged words:—

“ ‘ Ah, whither are we going, wretched ones ?  
Are ye so eager for an evil fate,  
That ye must go where Circè dwells, who waits  
To turn us into lions, swine, or wolves, 520  
Forced to remain and guard her spacious house ?  
So was it with the Cyclops, when our friends  
Went with this daring chief to his abode,  
And perished there through his foolhardiness.’

“ He spake ; and then I thought to draw my  
sword 525

From my stout thigh, and with the trenchant blade  
Strike off his head and let it fall to earth,  
Though he were my near kinsman ; yet the rest  
Restrained me, each one speaking kindly words :—

“ ‘ Nay, foster-child of Jove ! if thou consent, 530  
This man shall stay behind and with the ship,  
And he shall guard the ship, but lead us thou  
To where the sacred halls of Circè stand.’

“ They spake, and from the ship and shore went up  
Into the land, nor was Eurylochus 535  
Left with the ship ; he followed, for he feared  
My terrible threat. Meantime had Circè bathed  
My comrades at the palace, and with oil  
Anointed them, and robed them in fair cloaks  
And tunics. There we found them banqueting. 540  
When they and those who came with me beheld  
Each other, and the memory of the past  
Came back to them, they wept abundantly,

And all the palace echoed with their sobs.  
And then the mighty goddess came and said : — 545

“ ‘ Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
Prolong thou not these sorrows. Well I know  
What ye have suffered on the fishy deep,  
And all the evil that malignant men  
Have done to you on land. Now take the food 550  
Before you, drink the wine, till ye receive  
Into your hearts the courage that was yours  
When long ago ye left your fatherland,  
The rugged Ithaca. Ye are unnerved  
And spiritless with thinking constantly 555  
On your long wanderings, and your minds allow  
No space for mirth, for ye have suffered much.’ ”

“ She spake ; her words persuaded easily  
Our generous minds, and there from day to day  
We lingered a full year, and banqueted 560  
Nobly on plenteous meats and delicate wines.  
But when the year was ended, and the hours  
Renewed their circle, my beloved friends  
From Circè's palace called me forth and said : —

“ ‘ Good chief, do not forget thy native land, 565  
If fate indeed permit that ever thou  
Return in safety to that lofty pile  
Thy palace in the country of thy birth.

“ So spake they, and my generous mind was moved.  
All that day long until the set of sun 570  
We sat and feasted on the abundant meats  
And delicate wines ; and when the sun went down

They took their rest within the darkened halls,  
While I to Cîrcè's sumptuous couch went up,  
A suppliant at her knees. The goddess heard 575  
My prayer, as thus in winged words I said :—

“ ‘O Cîrcè ! make, I pray, the promise good  
Which thou hast given, to send me to my home.  
My heart is pining for it, and the hearts  
Of all my friends, who weary out my life 580  
Lamenting round me when thou art not nigh.’

“ I spake ; the mighty goddess thus replied :—  
‘ Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
Ulysses ! ye must not remain with me  
Unwillingly ; but ye have yet to make 585  
Another voyage, and must visit first  
The abode of Pluto, and of Proserpine  
His dreaded queen, and there consult the soul  
Of the blind seer Tiresias, — him of Thebes, —  
Whose intellect was spared ; for Proserpine 590  
Gave back to him in death the power of mind,  
That only he might know of things to come.  
The rest are shades that flit from place to place.’

“ Thus spake the goddess ; and my heart was  
wrung

With sorrow, and I sat upon the couch 595  
And wept, nor could I longer wish to live  
And see the light of day. But when my grief,  
With shedding tears and tossing where I sat,  
Was somewhat spent, I spake to Cîrcè thus :—

“ ‘O Cîrcè, who will guide me when I make 600

This voyage? for no galley built by man  
Has ever yet arrived at Pluto's realm.'

"I spake; the mighty goddess answered me:—  
'Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
Take thou no thought of who shall guide thy bark, 605  
But raise the mast and spread the glimmering sail,  
And seat thyself, and let the north-wind waft  
Thy galley on. As soon as thou shalt cross  
Océanus, and come to the low shore  
And groves of Proserpine, the lofty groups 610  
Of poplars, and the willows that let fall  
Their withered fruit, moor thou thy galley there  
In the deep eddies of Océanus,  
And pass to Pluto's comfortless abode.  
There into ~~Acheron~~ are poured the ~~streams~~ 615  
Of Pyriphlegethon, and of that arm  
Of Styx, Cocytus. At the place where meet  
The ever-roaring waters stands a rock;  
Draw near to that, and there I bid thee scoop  
In earth a trench, a cubit long and wide. 620  
And round about it pour to all the dead  
Libations,—milk and honey first, and next  
Rich wine, and lastly water, scattering  
White meal upon them. Offer there thy prayer  
Fervently to that troop of airy forms, 625  
And make the vow that thou wilt sacrifice,  
When thou at last shalt come to Ithaca,  
A heifer without blemish, barren yet,  
In thine own courts, and heap the altar-pyre

With things of price ; and to the seer alone, 630  
Tiresias, by himself, a ram whose fleece  
Is wholly black, the best of all thy flocks.  
And after thou hast duly offered prayer  
To all the illustrious nations of the dead,  
Then sacrifice a ram and a black ewe, 635  
Their faces turned toward Erebus, but thine  
The other way and toward the river streams.  
Thither the souls of those who died will flock  
In multitudes. Then call thy friends, and give  
Command to flay in haste the sheep that lie 640  
Slain by the cruel brass, and, burning there  
The carcasses, pay worship to the gods, —  
The powerful Pluto and dread Proserpine.  
Draw then the sword upon thy thigh, and sit,  
And suffer none of all those airy forms 645  
To touch the blood until thou first bespeak  
Tiresias. He will come, and speedily, —  
The leader of the people, — and will tell  
What voyage thou must make, what length of way  
Thou yet must measure, and will show thee how 650  
Thou mayst return across the fishy deep.’

“She spake ; and while she spake the Morn  
looked forth  
Upon her golden throne. The Nymph bestowed  
On me a cloak and tunic, and arrayed  
Herself in a white robe with ample folds, — 655  
A delicate web and graceful. Round her loins  
She clasped a shining zone of gold, and hung

A veil upon her forehead. Forth I went  
 Throughout the palace and aroused my friends,  
 And thus I said in cheerful tones to each :— 660

“ ‘No longer give yourselves to idle rest  
 And pleasant slumber ; we are to depart.  
 The gracious Circè counsels us to go.’

“ I spake, and easily their generous minds  
 Inclined to me. Yet brought I not away 665  
 All my companions safely from the isle.  
 Elpenor was the youngest of our band,  
 Not brave in war was he, nor wise in thought.  
 He, overcome with wine, and for the sake  
 Of coolness, had lain down to sleep, apart 670  
 From all the rest, in Circè’s sacred house ;  
 And as my friends bestirred themselves, the noise  
 And tumult roused him ; he forgot to come  
 By the long staircase ; headlong from the roof  
 He plunged ; his neck was broken at the spine, 675  
 And his soul went to the abode of death.

“ My friends came round me, and I said to  
 them :—

‘ Haply your thought may be that you are bound  
 For the dear country of your birth ; but know  
 That Circè sends us elsewhere, to consult 680  
 The Theban seer, Tiresias, in the abode  
 Of Pluto and the dreaded Proserpine.’

“ I spake, and their hearts failed them as they  
 heard ;  
 They sat them down, and wept, and tore their hair,

But fruitless were their sorrow and their tears. 685

“Thus as we sadly moved to our good ship  
Upon the sea-shore, weeping all the while,  
Circè, meantime, had visited its deck,  
And there had bound a ram and a black ewe  
By means we saw not ; for what eye discerns 690  
The presence of a deity, who moves  
From place to place, and wills not to be seen?”

## BOOK XI.

“**N**OW, when we reached our galley by the shore,  
We drew it first into the mighty deep,  
And set the mast and sails, and led on board  
The sheep, and sorrowfully and in tears  
Embarked ourselves. The fair-haired and august 5  
Circè, expert in music, sent with us  
A kindly fellow-voyager, — a wind  
That breathed behind the dark-prowed bark, and  
swelled  
The sails ; and now, with all things in their place  
Throughout the ship, we sat us down, — the breeze 10  
And helmsman guiding us upon our way.  
All day our sails were stretched, as o’er the deep  
Our vessel ran ; the sun went down ; the paths  
Of the great sea were darkened, and our bark  
Reached the far confines of Océanus. 15



“ There lies the land, and there the people dwell  
Of the Cimmerians, in eternal cloud  
And darkness. Never does the glorious sun  
Look on them with his rays, when he goes up  
Into the starry sky, nor when again 20  
He sinks from heaven to earth. Unwholesome night  
O'erhangs the wretched race. We touched the land,  
And, drawing up our galley on the beach,  
Took from on board the sheep, and followed on  
Beside the ocean-stream until we reached 25  
The place of which the goddess Circè spake.

“ Here Perimedes and Eurylochus  
Held in their grasp the victims, while I drew  
The trusty sword upon my thigh, and scooped  
A trench in earth, a cubit long and wide, 30  
Round which we stood, and poured to all the dead  
Libations, — milk and honey first, and next  
Rich wine, and lastly water, scattering  
White meal upon them. Then I offered prayer  
Fervently to that troop of airy forms, 35  
And made a vow that I would sacrifice,  
When I at last should come to Ithaca,  
A heifer without blemish, barren yet,  
In my own courts, and heap the altar-pyre  
With things of price, and to the seer alone, 40  
Tiresias, by himself, a ram whose fleece  
Was wholly black, the best of all my flocks.

“ When I had worshipped thus with prayer and  
vows

The nations of the dead, I took the sheep  
And pierced their throats above the hollow trench. 45  
The blood flowed dark ; and thronging round me  
came

Souls of the dead from Erebus, — young wives  
And maids unwedded, men worn out with years  
And toil, and virgins of a tender age  
In their new grief, and many a warrior slain 50  
In battle, mangled by the spear, and clad  
In bloody armor, who about the trench  
Flitted on every side, now here, now there,  
With gibbering cries, and I grew pale with fear.  
Then calling to my friends, I bade them flay 55  
The victims lying slaughtered by the knife,  
And, burning them with fire, invoke the gods, —  
The mighty Pluto and dread Proserpine.  
Then from my thigh I drew the trusty sword,  
And sat me down, and suffered none of all 60  
Those airy phantoms to approach the blood  
Until I should bespeak the Theban seer.

“ And first the soul of my companion came,  
Elpenor, for he was not buried yet  
In earth’s broad bosom. We had left him dead 65  
In Circè’s halls, unwept and unentombed.  
We had another task. But when I now  
Beheld I pitied him, and, shedding tears,  
I said these winged words : ‘ How camest thou,  
Elpenor, hither into these abodes 70  
Of night and darkness? Thou hast made more  
speed,

Although on foot, than I in my good ship.'

"I spake ; the phantom sobbed and answered  
me :—

' Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
Ulysses ! 't was the evil doom decreed 75  
By some divinity, and too much wine,  
That wrought my death. I laid myself to sleep  
In Circè's palace, and, remembering not  
The way to the long stairs that led below,  
Fell from the roof, and by the fall my neck 80  
Was broken at the spine ; my soul went down  
To Hades. I conjure thee now, by those  
Whom thou hast left behind and far away,  
Thy consort and thy father, — him by whom  
Thou when a boy wert reared, — and by thy son 85  
Telemachus, who in thy palace-halls  
Is left alone, — for well I know that thou,  
In going hence from Pluto's realm, wilt moor  
Thy gallant vessel in the Ææan isle, —  
That there, O king, thou wilt remember me, 90  
And leave me not when thou departest thence  
Unwept, unburied, lest I bring on thee  
The anger of the gods. But burn me there  
With all the armor that I wore, and pile,  
Close to the hoary deep, a mound for me, — 95  
A hapless man of whom posterity  
Shall hear. Do this for me, and plant upright  
Upon my tomb the oar with which I rowed,  
While yet a living man, among thy friends.'

“He spake and I replied: ‘Unhappy youth, 100  
All this I duly will perform for thee.’

“And then the soul of Anticleia came, —  
My own dead mother, daughter of the king  
Autolycus, large-minded. Her I left  
Alive, what time I sailed for Troy, and now 105  
I wept to see her there, and pitied her,  
And yet forbade her, though with grief, to come  
Near to the blood till I should first accost  
Tiresias. He too came, the Theban seer,  
Tiresias, bearing in his hand a wand 110  
Of gold; he knew me and bespake me thus: —

“‘Why, O unhappy mortal, hast thou left  
The light of day to come among the dead  
And to this joyless land? Go from the trench  
And turn thy sword away, that I may drink 115  
The blood, and speak the word of prophecy.’

“He spake; withdrawing from the trench, I thrust  
Into its sheath my silver-studded sword,  
And after drinking of the dark red blood  
The blameless prophet turned to me and said: — 120

“‘Illustrious chief Ulysses, thy desire  
Is for a happy passage to thy home,  
Yet will a god withstand thee. Not unmarked  
By Neptune shalt thou, as I deem, proceed  
Upon thy voyage. He hath laid up wrath 125  
Against thee in his heart, for that thy hand  
Deprived his son of sight. Yet may ye still  
Return, though after many hardships borne,

If thou but hold thy appetite in check,  
And that of thy companions, when thou bring 130  
Thy gallant bark to the Trinacrian isle,  
Safe from the gloomy deep. There will ye find  
The beeves and fatling wethers of the Sun, —  
The all-beholding and all-hearing Sun.  
If these ye leave unharmed, and keep in mind 135  
The thought of your return, ye may go back,  
Though sufferers, to your home in Ithaca ;  
But if thou do them harm, the event will be  
Destruction to thy ship and to its crew ;  
And thou, if thou escape it, wilt return 140  
Late to thy country, all thy comrades lost,  
And in a foreign bark, and thou shalt find  
Wrong in thy household, — arrogant men who waste  
Thy substance, wooers of thy noble wife,  
And offering bridal gifts. On thy return 145  
Thou shalt avenge thee of their violent deeds ;  
And when thou shalt have slain them in thy halls,  
Whether by stratagem or by the sword  
In open fight, then take a shapely oar  
And journey on, until thou meet with men 150  
Who have not known the sea nor eaten food  
Seasoned with salt, nor ever have beheld  
Galleys with crimson prows, nor shapely oars,  
Which are the wings of ships. I will declare  
A sign by which to know them, nor canst thou 155  
Mistake it. When a traveller, meeting thee,  
Shalt say that thou dost bear a winnowing-fan

Upon thy sturdy shoulder, stop and plant  
Thy shapely oar upright in earth, and there  
Pay to King Neptune solemn sacrifice, — 160  
A ram, a bull, and from his herd of swine  
A boar. And then returning to thy home,  
See that thou offer hallowed hecatombs  
To all the ever-living ones who dwell  
In the broad heaven, to each in order due. 165  
So at the last thy death shall come to thee  
Far from the sea, and gently take thee off  
In a serene old age that ends among  
A happy people. I have told thee true.'

"He spake, and thus I answered him: 'The  
    gods, 170  
Tiresias, have decreed as thou hast said.  
But tell, and tell me truly, — I behold  
The soul of my dead mother; there she sits  
In silence by the blood, and will not deign  
To look upon her son nor speak to him. 175  
Instruct me, mighty prophet, by what means  
To make my mother know me for her son.'

"I spake, and instantly the seer replied: —  
'Easily that is told; I give it thee  
To bear in mind. Whoever of the dead 180  
Thou sufferest to approach and drink the blood  
Will speak the truth; those whom thou dost forbid  
To taste the blood will silently withdraw.'

"The soul of King Tiresias, saying this,  
Passed to the abode of Pluto; he had given 185

The oracle I asked. I waited still  
Until my mother, drawing near again,  
Drank the dark blood ; she knew me suddenly,  
And said in piteous tones these winged words :—

“ ‘How didst thou come, my child, a living man,  
Into this place of darkness? Difficult 191

It is for those who breathe the breath of life  
To visit these abodes, through which are rolled  
Great rivers, fearful floods, — the first of these  
Océanus, whose waters none can cross 195

On foot, or save on board a trusty bark.  
Hast thou come hither on thy way from Troy,  
A weary wanderer with thy ship and friends?  
And hast thou not been yet at Ithaca,  
Nor in thine island palace seen thy wife?’ 200

“She spake, I answered : ‘ ’T is necessity,  
Dear mother, that has brought me to the abode  
Of Pluto, to consult the Theban seer,  
Tiresias. Not to the Achaian coast  
Have I returned, nor reached our country, yet 205  
Continually I wander ; everywhere

I meet misfortune, — even from the time  
When, in the noble Agamemnon’s train,  
I came to Ilium, famed for steeds, and made  
War on its dwellers. Tell me now, I pray, 210  
And truly, how it was that fate on thee  
Brought the long sleep of death? by slow disease?  
Or, stealing on thee, did the archer-queen,  
Diana, slay thee with her silent shafts?

And tell me of my father, and the son 215  
Left in my palace. Rests the sway I bore  
On them, or has another taken it,  
Since men believe I shall return no more?  
And tell me of my wedded wife, her thoughts  
And purposes, and whether she remains 220  
Yet with my son. Is she the guardian still  
Of my estates, or has the noblest chief  
Of those Achaians led her thence a bride?'

"I spake ; my reverend mother answered thus : —  
'Most certain is it that she sadly dwells 225  
Still in thy palace. Weary days and nights  
And tears are hers. No man has taken yet  
Thy place as ruler, but Telemachus  
Still has the charge of thy domain, and gives  
The liberal feasts which it befits a prince 230  
To give, for all invite him. In the fields  
Thy father dwells, and never in the town  
Is seen ; nor beds nor cloaks has he, nor mats  
Of rich device, but, all the winter through,  
He sleeps where sleep the laborers, on the hearth, 235  
Amid the dust, and wears a wretched garb ;  
And when the summer comes, or autumn days  
Ripen the fruit, his bed is on the ground,  
And made of leaves, that everywhere are shed  
In the rich vineyards. There he lies and grieves, 240  
And, cherishing his sorrow, mourns thy fate,  
And keenly feels the miseries of age.  
And thus I underwent my fate and died ;



For not the goddess of the unerring bow  
 Stealing upon me smote me in thy halls 245  
 With silent arrows, nor did slow disease  
 Come o'er me, such as, wasting cruelly  
 The members, takes at last the life away ;  
 But constant longing for thee, anxious thoughts  
 Of thee, and memory of thy gentleness, 250  
 Ulysses, made an end of my sweet life.'

"She spake ; I longed to take into my arms  
 The soul of my dead mother. Thrice I tried,  
 Moved by a strong desire, and thrice the form  
 Passed through them like a shadow or a dream. 255  
 And then did the great sorrow in my heart  
 Grow sharper, and in winged words I said :—

"'Beloved mother, why wilt thou not keep  
 Thy place, that I may clasp thee, so that here,  
 In Pluto's realm and in each other's arms, 260  
 We each might in the other soothe the sense  
 Of misery? Hath mighty Proserpine  
 Sent but an empty shade to meet me here,  
 That I might only grieve and sigh the more?'

"I spake, and then my reverend mother said :—  
 'Believe not that Jove's daughter Proserpine 265  
 Deceives thee. 'T is the lot of all our race  
 When they are dead. No more the sinews bind  
 The bones and flesh, when once from the white  
 bones

The life departs. Then like a dream the soul 270  
 Flies off, and flits about from place to place.

But haste thou to the light again, and mark  
What I have said, that thou in after days  
Mayst tell it to thy wife on thy return.'

"Thus we conferred. Meantime the women  
came

275

Around me, moved by mighty Proserpine ;  
In throngs they gathered to the dark red blood.  
Then, as I pondered how to question each,  
This seemed the wisest, — from my sturdy thigh  
I plucked the trenchant sword, and suffered not 280  
All that were there to taste the blood at once ;  
So one by one they came, and each in turn  
Declared her lineage. Thus I questioned all.

"Then saw I high-born Tyro first, who claimed  
To be the daughter of that blameless man 285  
Salmoneus, and who called herself the wife  
Of Cretheus, son of Æolus. She loved  
Enipeus, hallowed river, fairest stream  
Of all that flow on earth, and often walked  
Beside its pleasant waters. He whose arms 290  
Surround the islands, Neptune, once put on  
The river's form, and at its gulfy mouth  
Met her ; the purple waters stood upright  
Around them like a wall, and formed an arch,  
And hid the god and woman. There he loosed 295  
The virgin zone of Tyro, shedding sleep  
Upon her. Afterward he took her hand  
And said : ' Rejoice, O maiden, in our love,  
For with the year's return shalt thou bring forth

Illustrious sons ; the embraces of the gods 300  
 Are not unfruitful. Rear them carefully.  
 And now return to thy abode, and watch  
 Thy words, and keep thy secret. Thou must know  
 That I am Neptune, he who shakes the earth.'

"He spake, and plunged into the billowy deep.  
 And she became a mother, and brought forth 305  
 Pelias and Neleus, valiant ministers  
 Of mighty Jupiter. On the broad lands  
 Of Iäolchos Pelias dwelt, and reared  
 Vast flocks of sheep, while Neleus made his home  
 In Pylos midst the sands. The queenly dame, 311  
 His mother, meanwhile brought forth other sons  
 To Cretheus, — Æson first, and Pheres next,  
 And Amythaon, great in horsemanship.

"And after her I saw Antiopè, 315  
 The daughter of Asopus, — her who made  
 A boast that she had slumbered in the arms  
 Of Jove. Two sons she bore, — Amphion one,  
 The other Zethus, — and they founded Thebes  
 With its seven gates, and girt it round with towers ;  
 For, valiant as they were, they could not dwell 321  
 Safely in that great town unfenced by towers.

"And after her I saw Amphitryon's wife,  
 Alcmena, her who brought forth Hercules,  
 The dauntless hero of the lion-heart, — 325  
 For she had given herself into the arms  
 Of mighty Jupiter. I also saw  
 Megara there, a daughter of the house

Of haughty Creion. Her Amphitryon's son,  
Untamable in strength, had made his wife. 330

“The mother, too, of Cædipus I saw,  
Beautiful Epicastè, who in life  
Had done unwittingly a heinous deed, —  
Had married her own son, who, having slain  
Her father first, espoused her ; but the gods 335  
Published abroad the rumor of the crime.  
He in the pleasant town of Thebes bore sway  
O'er the Cadmeians ; yet in misery  
He lived, for so the offended gods ordained.  
And she went down to Hades and the gates 340  
That stand forever barred ; for, wild with grief,  
She slung a cord upon a lofty beam  
And perished by it, leaving him to bear  
Woes without measure, such as on a son  
The furies of a mother might inflict. 345

“And there I saw the dame supremely fair,  
Chloris, whom Neleus with large marriage-gifts  
Wooed, and brought home a bride ; the youngest  
she

Among the daughters of Iäsus' son,  
Amphion, ruler o'er Orchomenus, 350  
The Minyeian town, and o'er the realm  
Of Pylos. Three illustrious sons she bore  
To Neleus, — Nestor, Chromius, and a chief  
Of lofty bearing, Periclymenus.  
She brought forth Pero also, marvellous 355  
In beauty, wooed by all the region round ;

But Neleus would bestow the maid on none  
Save him who should drive off from Phylacè  
The beeves, broad-fronted and with crooked horns,  
Of valiant Iphicles, — a difficult task. 360

One man alone, a blameless prophet, dared  
Attempt it ; but he found himself withstood  
By fate, and rigid fetters, and a force  
Of rustic herdsmen. Months and days went by,  
And the full year, led by the hours, came round. 365  
The valiant Iphicles, who from the seer  
Had heard the oracles explained, took off  
The shackles, and the will of Jove was done.

“Then saw I Leda, wife of Tyndarus,  
Who bore to Tyndarus two noble sons, 370  
Castor the horseman, Pollux skilled to wield  
The cestus. Both of them have still a place  
Upon the fruitful earth ; for Jupiter  
Gave them such honor that they live by turns  
Each one a day, and then are with the dead 375  
Each one by turns ; they rank among the gods.

“The wife of Aloëus next appeared,  
Iphidameia, who, as she declared,  
Had won the love of Neptune. She brought forth  
Two short-lived sons, — one like a god in form, 380  
Named Otus ; and the other, far renowned,  
Named Ephialtes. These the bounteous earth  
Nourished to be the tallest of mankind,  
And goodliest, save Orion. When the twain  
Had seen but nine years of their life, they stood 385

In breadth of frame nine cubits, and in height  
Nine fathoms. They against the living gods  
Threatened to wage, upon the Olympian height,  
Fierce and tumultuous battle, and to fling  
Ossa upon Olympus, and to pile 390  
Pelion, with all its growth of leafy woods,  
On Ossa, that the heavens might thus be scaled.  
And they, if they had reached their prime of youth,  
Had made their menace good. The son of Jove  
And amber-haired Latona took their lives 395  
Ere yet beneath their temples sprang the down  
And covered with its sprouting tufts the chin.

“Phædra I saw, and Procris, and the child  
Of the wise Minos, Ariadne, famed  
For beauty, whom the hero Theseus once 400  
From Crete to hallowed Athens’ fertile coast  
Led, but possessed her not. Diana gave  
Ear to the tale which Bacchus brought to her,  
And in the isle of Dia slew the maid.

“And Mæra I beheld, and Clymenè, 405  
And Eriphylè, hateful in her guilt,  
Who sold her husband for a price in gold.  
But vainly might I think to name them all, —  
The wives and daughters of heroic men  
Whom I beheld, — for first the ambrosial night 410  
Would wear away. And now for me the hour  
Of sleep is come, at my good ship among  
My friends, or haply here. Meantime the care  
For my return is with the gods and you.”

He spake, and all were silent : all within 415  
The shadows of those palace-halls were held  
Motionless by the charm of what he said.  
And thus the white-armed Queen Aretè spake : —

“ Phæacians, how appears this man to you  
In form, in stature, and well-judging mind? 420  
My guest he is, but each among you shares  
The honor of the occasion. Now, I pray,  
Dismiss him not in haste, nor sparingly  
Bestow your gifts on one in so much need ;  
For in your dwellings is much wealth, bestowed 425  
Upon you by the bounty of the gods.”

Then also Echeneüs, aged chief,  
The oldest man of the Phæacians, spake : —

“ My friends, the word of our sagacious queen  
Errs not, nor is ill-timed, and yours it is 430  
To hearken and obey : but all depends  
Upon Alcinoüs, — both the word and deed.”

And then in turn Alcinoüs spake : “ That word  
Shall be fulfilled, if I am ruler here  
O'er the Phæacians, skilled in seamanship. 435  
But let the stranger, though he long for home,  
Bear to remain till morning, that his store  
Of gifts may be complete. To send him home  
Shall be the charge of all, but mostly mine,  
Since mine it is to hold the sovereign power.” 440

And then the wise Ulysses said : “ O King  
Alcinoüs, eminent o'er all thy race !  
Shouldst thou command me to remain with thee

Even for a twelvemonth, and at length provide  
For my return, and give me princely gifts, 445  
Even that would please me ; for with fuller hands,  
The happier were my lot on my return  
To my own land. I should be honored then,  
And meet a kinder welcome there from all  
Who see me in my Ithaca once more.” 450

And then again in turn Alcinoüs spake : —  
“Ulysses, when we look on thee, we feel  
No fear that thou art false, or one of those,  
The many, whom the dark earth nourishes,  
Wandering at large, and forging lies, that we 455  
May not suspect them. Thou hast grace of speech  
And noble thoughts, and fitly hast thou told,  
Even as a minstrel might, the history  
Of all thy Argive brethren and thy own.  
Now say, and frankly, didst thou also see 460  
Any of those heroic men who went  
With thee to Troy, and in that region met  
Their fate? A night immeasurably long  
Is yet before us. Let us have thy tale  
Of wonders. I could listen till the break 465  
Of hallowed morning, if thou canst endure  
So long to speak of hardships thou hast borne.”

He spake, and wise Ulysses answered thus : —  
“O King Alcinoüs, eminent beyond  
All others of thy people. For discourse 470  
There is a time ; there is a time for sleep.  
If more thou yet wouldst hear, I will not spare.



To give the story of the greater woes  
 Of my companions, who were afterward  
 Cut off from life ; and though they had escaped 475  
 The cruel Trojan war, on their return  
 They perished by awoan's fraud and guilt.

“When chaste Proserpina had made the ghosts  
 Of women scatter right and left, there came  
 The soul of Agamemnon, Atreus' son. 480  
 He came attended by a throng of those  
 Who in the palace of Ægisthus met  
 A fate like his and died. When he had drunk  
 The dark red blood, he knew me at a look,  
 And wailed aloud, and, bursting into tears, 485  
 Stretched out his hands to touch me ; but no power  
 Was there of grasp or pressure, such as once  
 Dwelt in those active limbs. I could not help  
 But weep at sight of him, for from my heart  
 I pitied him, and spake these winged words :— 490

“ ‘Most glorious son of Atreus, king of men !  
 How, Agamemnon, has the fate that brings  
 To man the everlasting sleep of death  
 O’ertaken thee ? Did Neptune, calling up  
 The winds in all their fury, make thy fleet 495  
 A wreck, or did thine enemies on land  
 Smite thee, as thou wert driving off their beeves  
 And their fair flocks, or fighting to defend  
 Some city, and the helpless women there ?’

“ I spake, and Agamemnon thus replied :— 500  
 ‘Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,

'T was not that Neptune calling up the winds  
In all their fury wrecked me in my fleet,  
Nor hostile warriors smote me on the land,  
But that Ægisthus, bent upon my death, 505  
Plotted against me with my guilty wife,  
And bade me to his house and slew me there,  
Even at the banquet, as a hind might slay  
A bullock at the stall. With me they slew  
My comrades, as a herd of white-toothed swine 510  
Are slaughtered for some man of large estates,  
Who makes a wedding or a solemn feast.  
Thou hast seen many perish by the sword  
In the hard battle, one by one, and yet  
Thou wouldst have pitied us, hadst thou beheld 515  
The slain beside the wine-jar, and beneath  
The loaded tables, while the pavement swam  
With blood. I heard Cassandra's piteous cry,  
The cry of Priam's daughter, stricken down  
By treacherous Clytemnestra at my side. 520  
And there I lay, and, dying, raised my hands  
To grasp my sword. The shameless woman went  
Her way, nor stayed to close my eyes, nor press  
My mouth into its place, although my soul  
Was on its way to Hades. There is naught 525  
That lives more horrible, more lost to shame,  
Than is the woman who has brought her mind  
To compass deeds like these, — the wretch who plans  
So foul a crime, — the murder of the man  
Whom she a virgin wedded. I had looked 530

For a warm welcome from my children here,  
And all my household in my ancient home.  
This woman, deep in wickedness, hath brought  
Disgrace upon herself and all her sex,  
Even those who give their thoughts to doing good.' <sup>535</sup>

"He spake, and I replied : ' O, how the God  
Who wields the thunder, Jupiter, must hate  
The house of Atreus for the women's sake !  
At first we fell by myriads in the cause  
Of Helen ; Clytemnestra now hath planned <sup>540</sup>  
This guile against thee while thou wert afar.'

"I spake, and instantly his answer came : —  
'Therefore be not compliant to thy wife,  
Nor let her hear from thee whatever lies  
Within thy knowledge. Tell her but a part, <sup>545</sup>  
And keep the rest concealed. Yet is thy life,  
Ulysses, in no danger from thy spouse ;  
For wise and well instructed in the rules  
Of virtuous conduct is Penelope,  
The daughter of Icarius. When we went <sup>550</sup>  
To war, we left her a young bride ; a babe  
Was at her breast, a boy, who now must sit  
Among grown men ; and fortunate is he,  
For certainly his father will behold  
The youth on his return, and he embrace <sup>555</sup>  
His father, as is meet. But as for me,  
My consort suffered not my eyes to feed  
Upon the sight of my own son ; for first  
She slew me. This, then, I admonish thee, —

Heed thou my words. Bring not thy ship to land 560  
Openly in thy country, but by stealth,  
Since now no longer can we put our trust  
In woman. Meantime, tell me of my son,  
And faithfully, if thou hast heard of him  
As living, whether in Orchomenus, 565  
Or sandy Pylos, or in the broad realm  
Of Menelaus, Sparta ; for not yet  
Has my Orestes passed from earth and life.'

"He spake, and I replied : 'Why ask of me  
That question, O Atrides? I know not 570  
Whether thy son be living or be dead,  
And this is not a time for idle words.'

"Thus in sad talk we stood, and freely flowed  
Our tears. Meanwhile the ghosts of Peleus' son  
Achilles, and Patroclus, excellent 575  
Antilochus, and Ajax, all drew near, —  
Ajax for form and stature eminent  
O'er all the Greeks save Peleus' faultless son.  
Then did the soul of fleet Æacides  
Know me, and thus in winged words he said : — 580

"Ulysses ! what hath moved thee to attempt  
This greatest of thy labors? How is it  
That thou hast found the courage to descend  
To Hades, where the dead, the bodiless forms  
Of those whose work is done on earth, abide?' 585

"He spake ; I answered : 'Greatest of the  
Greeks !

Achilles, son of Peleus ! 'T was to hear

The counsel of Tiresias that I came,  
If haply he might tell me by what means  
To reach my rugged Ithaca again ; 590  
For yet have I not trod my native coast,  
Nor even have drawn nigh to Greece. I meet  
Misfortunes everywhere. But as for thee,  
Achilles, no man lived before thy time,  
Nor will hereafter live, more fortunate 595  
Than thou, — for while alive we honored thee  
As if thou wert a god, and now again  
In these abodes thou rulest o'er the dead ;  
Therefore, Achilles, shouldst thou not be sad.'

"I spake ; Achilles quickly answered me : — 600  
'Noble Ulysses, speak not thus of death,  
As if thou couldst console me. I would be  
A laborer on earth, and serve for hire  
Some man of mean estate, who makes scant cheer,  
Rather than reign o'er all who have gone down 605  
To death. Speak rather of my noble son,  
Whether or not he yet has joined the wars  
To fight among the foremost of the host.  
And tell me also if thou aught hast heard  
Of blameless Peleus, — whether he be yet 610  
Honored among his many Myrmidons,  
Or do they hold him now in small esteem  
In Hellas and in Phthia, since old age  
Unnerves his hands and feet, and I no more  
Am there, beneath the sun, to give him aid, 615  
Strong as I was on the wide plain of Troy,

When warring for the Achaian cause I smote  
That valiant people. Could I come again,  
But for a moment, with my former strength,  
Into my father's palace, I would make 620  
That strength and these unconquerable hands  
A terror to the men who do him wrong,  
And rob him of the honor due a king.'

"He spake ; I answered : ' Nothing have I heard  
Of blameless Peleus, but I will relate 625  
The truth concerning Neoptolemus,  
Thy son, as thou requirest. Him I took  
From Scyros in a gallant bark to join  
The well-armed Greeks. Know, then, that when  
we sat

In council, planning to conduct the war 630  
Against the city of Troy, he always rose  
The first to speak, nor were his words unwise.  
The godlike Nestor and myself alone  
Rivalled him in debate. And when we fought  
About the city walls, he loitered not 635  
Among the others in the numerous host,  
But hastened on before them, giving place  
To no man there in valor. Many men  
He slew in desperate combat, whom to name  
Were past my power, so many were they all 640  
Whom in the cause of Greece he struck to earth.  
Yet one I name, Eurýpylus, the son  
Of Tēlephus, who perished by his sword  
With many of his band, Citeians, led

To war because of liberal gifts bestowed 645  
Upon their chieftain's wife ; the noblest he  
Of men, in form, whom I have ever seen,  
Save Memnon. When into the wooden steed,  
Framed by Epeius, we the chiefs of Greece  
Ascended, and to me was given the charge 650  
Of all things there, to open and to shut  
The close-built fraud, while others of high rank  
Among the Greeks were wiping off their tears,  
And their limbs shook, I never saw thy son  
Turn pale in his fine face, or brush away 655  
A tear, but he besought me earnestly  
That he might leave our hiding-place, and grasped  
His falchion's hilt, and lifted up his spear  
Heavy with brass, for in his mind he smote  
The Trojan crowd already. When at last 660  
We had o'erthrown and sacked the lofty town  
Of Priam, he embarked upon a ship,  
With all his share of spoil, — a large reward, —  
Unhurt, not touched in combat hand to hand,  
Nor wounded from afar, as oftentimes 665  
Must be the fortune of a fight, for Mars  
Is wont to rage without regard to men.'

"I spake. The soul of swift Æacides  
Over the meadows thick with asphodel  
Departed with long strides, well pleased to hear 670  
From me the story of his son's renown.

"The other ghosts of those who lay in death  
Stood sorrowing by, and each one told his griefs ;

But that of Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Kept far aloof, displeased that I had won 675  
The victory contending at the fleet  
Which should possess the arms of Peleus' son.  
His goddess-mother laid them as a prize  
Before us, and the captive sons of Troy  
And Pallas were the umpires to award 680  
The victory. And now how much I wish  
I had not conquered in a strife like that,  
Since for that cause the dark earth hath received  
The hero Ajax, who in nobleness  
Of form and greatness of exploits excelled 685  
All other Greeks, except the blameless son  
Of Peleus. Then I spake in soothing words :—

“ ‘ O Ajax, son of blameless Telamon !  
Wilt thou not even in death forget the wrath  
Caused by the strife for those accursed arms ? 690  
The gods have made them fatal to the Greeks,  
For thou, the bulwark of our host, didst fall,  
And we lamented thee as bitterly  
When thou wert dead as we had mourned the son  
Of Peleus. Nor was any man to blame ; 695  
'T was Jupiter who held in vehement hate  
The army of the warlike Greeks, and laid  
This doom upon thee. Now, O king, draw near,  
And hear our voice and words, and check, I pray,  
The anger rising in thy generous breast.’ 700

“ I spake ; he answered not, but moved away  
To Erebus, among the other souls



Of the departed. Yet would I have had  
Speech of him, angry as he was, or else  
Have spoken to him further, but my wish 705  
Was strong to see yet others of the dead.

“Then I beheld the illustrious son of Jove,  
Minos, a golden sceptre in his hand,  
Sitting to judge the dead, who round the king  
Pleaded their causes. There they stood or sat 710  
In Pluto’s halls, — a pile with ample gates.

“And next I saw the huge Orion drive,  
Across the meadows green with asphodel,  
The savage beast whom he had slain ; he bore  
The brazen mace, which no man’s power could  
break. 715

“And Tityus there I saw, — the mighty earth  
His mother, — overspreading, as he lay,  
Nine acres, with two vultures at his side,  
That, plucking at his liver, plunged their beaks  
Into the flesh ; nor did his hands avail 720  
To drive them off, for he had offered force  
To Jove’s proud wife Latona, as she went  
To Pytho, through the pleasant Panopeus.

“And next I looked on Tantalus, a prey  
To grievous torments, standing in a lake 725  
That reached his chin. Though painfully athirst,  
He could not drink ; as often as he bowed  
His aged head to take into his lips  
The water, it was drawn away, and sank  
Into the earth, and the dark soil appeared 730

Around his feet ; a god had dried it up.  
And lofty trees drooped o'er him, hung with fruit, —  
Pears and pomegranates, apples fair to sight,  
And luscious figs, and olives green of hue.  
And when that ancient man put forth his hands 735  
To pluck them from their stems, the wind arose  
And whirled them far among the shadowy clouds.

“ There I beheld the shade of Sisyphus  
Amid his sufferings. With both hands he rolled  
A huge stone up a hill. To force it up, 740  
He leaned against the mass with hands and feet ;  
But, ere it crossed the summit of the hill  
A power was felt that sent it rolling back,  
And downward plunged the unmanageable rock  
Before him to the plain. Again he toiled 745  
To heave it upward, while the sweat in streams  
Ran down his limbs, and dust begrimed his brow.

“ Then I beheld the mighty Hercules, —  
The hero's image, — for he sits himself  
Among the deathless gods, well pleased to share 750  
Their feasts, and Hebe of the dainty feet —  
A daughter of the mighty Jupiter  
And golden-sandalled Juno — is his wife.  
Around his image flitted to and fro  
The ghosts with noise, like fear-bewildered birds. 755  
His look was dark as night. He held in hand  
A naked bow, a shaft upon the string,  
And fiercely gazed, like one about to send  
The arrow forth. Upon his breast he wore

The formidable baldric, on whose band 760  
Of gold were sculptured marvels, — forms of bears,  
Wild boars, grim lions, battles, skirmishings,  
And death by wounds, and slaughter. He who  
wrought

That band had never done the like before,  
Nor could thereafter. As I met his eye, 765  
The hero knew me, and, beholding me  
With pity, said to me in winged words :—

“ ‘ Son of Laertes, nobly born and wise,  
And yet unhappy ; surely thou dost bear  
A cruel fate, like that which I endured 770  
While yet I saw the brightness of the sun.  
The offspring of Saturnian Jupiter  
Am I, and yet was I compelled to serve  
One of a meaner race than I, who set  
Difficult tasks. He sent me hither once 775  
To bring away the guardian hound ; he deemed  
No harder task might be. I brought him hence ;  
I led him up from Hades, with such aid  
As Hermes and the blue-eyed Pallas gave.’

“ Thus having spoken, he withdrew again 780  
Into the abode of Pluto. I remained  
And kept my place, in hope there yet might come  
Hèroes who perished in the early time,  
And haply I might look on some of those, —  
The ancients, whom I greatly longed to see, — 785  
On Theseus and Pirithoüs, glorious men,  
The children of the gods. But now there flocked

Already round me, with a mighty noise,  
 The innumerable nations of the dead ;  
 And I grew pale with fear, lest from the halls 790  
 Of Pluto the stern Proserpine should send  
 The frightful visage of the monster-maid,  
 The Gorgon. Hastening to my ship, I bade  
 The crew embark, and cast the hawsers loose.  
 Quickly they went on board, and took their seats 795  
 Upon the benches. Through Océanus  
 The current bore my galley, aided first  
 By oars and then by favorable gales."

## BOOK XII.

"NOW when our bark had left Océanus  
 And entered the great deep, we reached  
 the isle

Ææa, where the Morning, child of Dawn,  
 Abides, and holds her dances, and the Sun  
 Goes up from earth. We landed there and drew 5  
 Our galley up the beach ; we disembarked  
 And laid us down to sleep beside the sea,  
 And waited for the holy Morn to rise.

"Then when the rosy-fingered Morn appeared,  
 The child of Dawn, I sent my comrades forth 10  
 To bring from Circè's halls Elpenor's corse.  
 And where a headland stretched into the deep

We hewed down trees, and held the funeral rites  
With many tears ; and having there consumed  
The body and the arms with fire, we built 15  
A tomb, and reared a column to the dead,  
And on its summit fixed a tapering oar.

“ All this was duly done ; yet was the news  
Of our return from Hades not concealed  
From Circè. She attired herself in haste 20  
And came ; her maids came with her, bringing bread  
And store of meats and generous wine ; and thus  
Spake the wise goddess, standing in the midst : —

“ ‘ Ah, daring ones ! who, yet alive, have gone  
Down to the abode of Pluto ; twice to die 25  
Is yours, while others die but once. Yet now  
Take food, drink wine, and hold a feast to-day,  
And with the dawn of morning ye shall sail ;  
And I will show the way, and teach you all  
Its dangers, so that ye may not lament 30  
False counsels followed, either on the land  
Or on the water, to your grievous harm.’

“ She spake ; and our confiding minds were swayed  
Easily by her counsels. All that day  
Till set of sun we sat and banqueted 35  
Upon the abundant meats and generous wines ;  
And when the Sun went down, and darkness came,  
The crew beside the fastenings of our bark  
Lay down to sleep, while Circè took my hand,  
Led me apart, and made me sit, and took 40  
Her seat before me, and inquired of all

That I had seen. I told her faithfully,  
And then the mighty goddess Circè said :—  
“ ‘ Thus far is well ; now heedfully attend  
To what I say, and may some deity 45  
Help thee remember it ! Thou first wilt come  
To where the Sirens haunt. They throw a spell  
O’er all who pass that way. If unawares  
One finds himself so nigh that he can hear  
Their voices, round him nevermore shall wife 50  
And lisping children gather, welcoming  
His safe return with joy. The Sirens sit  
In a green field, and charm with mellow notes  
The comer, while beside them lie in heaps  
The bones of men decaying underneath 55  
The shrivelled skins. Take heed and pass them by.  
First fill with wax well kneaded in the palm  
The ears of thy companions, that no sound  
May enter. Hear the music, if thou wilt,  
But let thy people bind thee, hand and foot, 60  
To the good ship, upright against the mast,  
And round it wind the cord, that thou mayst hear  
The ravishing notes. But shouldst thou then entreat  
Thy men, commanding them to set thee free,  
Let them be charged to bind thee yet more fast 65  
With added bands. And when they shall have passed  
The Sirens by, I will not judge for thee  
Which way to take ; consider for thyself ;  
I tell thee of two ways. There is a pile  
Of beetling rocks, where roars the mighty surge 70

Of dark-eyed Amphitritè ; these are called  
The Wanderers by the blessed gods. No birds  
Can pass them safe, not even the timid doves,  
Which bear ambrosia to our father Jove,  
But ever doth the slippery rock take off 75  
Some one, whose loss the God at once supplies,  
To keep their number full. To these no bark  
Guided by man has ever come, and left  
The spot unwrecked ; the billows of the deep  
And storms of fire in air have scattered wide 80  
Timbers of ships and bodies of drowned men.  
One only of the barks that plough the deep  
Has passed them safely, — Argo, known to all  
By fame, when coming from Ææta home, —  
And her the billows would have dashed against 85  
The enormous rocks, if Juno, for the sake  
Of Jason, had not come to guide it through.

“ ‘ Two are the rocks ; one lifts to the broad heaven  
Its pointed summit, where a dark gray cloud  
Broods, and withdraws not ; never is the sky 90  
Clear o’er that peak, not even in summer days  
Or autumn ; nor can man ascend its steeps,  
Or venture down, — so smooth the sides, as if  
Man’s art had polished them. There in the midst  
Upon the western side toward Erebus 95  
There yawns a shadowy cavern ; thither thou,  
Noble Ulysses, steer thy bark, yet keep  
So far aloof that, standing on the deck,  
A youth might send an arrow from a bow

Just to the cavern's mouth. There Scylla dwells, <sup>100</sup>  
And fills the air with fearful yells ; her voice  
The cry of whelps just littered, but herself  
A frightful prodigy, — a sight which none  
Would care to look on, though he were a god.  
Twelve feet are hers, all shapeless ; six long necks, <sup>105</sup>  
A hideous head on each, and triple rows  
Of teeth, close set and many, threatening death.  
And half her form is in the cavern's womb,  
And forth from that dark gulf her heads are thrust,  
To look abroad upon the rocks for prey, — <sup>110</sup>  
Dolphin, or dogfish, or the mightier whale,  
Such as the murmuring Amphitritè breeds  
In multitudes. No mariner can boast  
That he has passed by Scylla with a crew  
Unharmed ; she snatches from the deck, and bears  
Away in each grim mouth, a living man. <sup>116</sup>

“ ‘ Another rock, Ulysses, thou wilt see,  
Of lower height, so near her that a spear,  
Cast by the hand, might reach it. On it grows  
A huge wild fig-tree with luxuriant leaves. <sup>120</sup>  
Below, Charybdis, of immortal birth,  
Draws the dark water down ; for thrice a day  
She gives it forth, and thrice with fearful whirl  
She draws it in. O, be it not thy lot  
To come while the dark water rushes down ! <sup>125</sup>  
Even Neptune could not then deliver thee.  
Then turn thy course with speed toward Scylla's rock,  
And pass that way ; 't were better far that six



Should perish from the ship than all be lost.'

"She spake, and I replied : 'O goddess, deign 130  
To tell me truly, cannot I at once  
Escape Charybdis and defend my friends  
Against the rage of Scylla when she strikes?'

"I spake ; the mighty goddess answered me :—  
'Rash man ! dost thou still think of warlike deeds,  
And feats of strength ? And wilt thou not give way  
Even to the deathless gods ? That pest is not 137  
Of mortal mould ; she cannot die, she is  
A thing to tremble and to shudder at,  
And fierce, and never to be overcome. 140  
There is no room for courage ; flight is best.  
And if thou shouldst delay beside the rock  
To take up arms, I fear lest once again  
She fall on thee with all her heads, and seize  
As many men. Pass by the monster's haunt 145  
With all the speed that thou canst make, and call  
Upon Cratæis, who brought Scylla forth  
To be the plague of men, and who will calm  
Her rage, that she assault thee not again.

" 'Then in thy voyage shalt thou reach the isle 150  
Trinacria, where, in pastures of the Sun,  
His many beeves and fatling sheep are fed, —  
Seven herds of oxen, and as many flocks  
Of sheep, and fifty in each flock and herd.  
They never multiply ; they never die. 155  
Two shepherdesses tend them, goddesses,  
Nymphs with redundant locks, — Lampelia one,

The other Phaëthusa. These the nymph  
Næëra to the overgoing Sun  
Brought forth, and when their queenly mother's care  
Had reared them, she appointed them to dwell 161  
In far Trinacria, there to keep the flocks  
And oxen of their father. If thy thoughts  
Be fixed on thy return, so that thou leave  
These flocks and herds unharmed, ye all will come 165  
To Ithaca, though after many toils.  
But if thou rashly harm them, I foretell  
Destruction to thy ship and all its crew ;  
And if thyself escape, thou wilt return  
Late and in sorrow, all thy comrades lost.' 170

“She spake ; the Morning on her golden throne  
Looked forth ; the glorious goddess went her way  
Into the isle, I to my ship, and bade  
The men embark and cast the hawsers loose.  
And straight they went on board, and duly manned  
The benches, smiting as they sat with oars 176  
The hoary waters. Circè, amber-haired,  
The mighty goddess of the musical voice,  
Sent a fair wind behind our dark-prowed ship  
That gayly bore us company, and filled 180  
The sails. When we had fairly ordered all  
On board our galley, we sat down, and left  
The favoring wind and helm to bear us on,  
And thus in sadness I bespake the crew :—

“ ‘ My friends ! it were not well that one or two 185  
Alone should know the oracles I heard

From Circè, great among the goddesses ;  
And now will I disclose them, that ye all,  
Whether we are to die or to escape  
The doom of death, may be forewarned. And first  
Against the wicked Sirens and their song 191  
And flowery bank she warns us. I alone  
May hear their voice, but ye must bind me first  
With bands too strong to break, that I may stand  
Upright against the mast ; and let the cords 195  
Be fastened round it. If I then entreat  
And bid you loose me, make the bands more strong.'

" Thus to my crew I spake, and told them all  
That they should know, while our good ship drew  
near

The island of the Sirens, prosperous gales 200  
Wafting it gently onward. Then the breeze  
Sank to a breathless calm ; some deity  
Had hushed the winds to slumber. Straightway rose  
The men and furled the sails and laid them down  
Within the ship, and sat and made the sea 205  
White with the beating of their polished blades,  
Made of the fir-tree. Then I took a mass  
Of wax and cut it into many parts,  
And kneaded each with a strong hand. It grew  
Warm with the pressure, and the beams of him 210  
Who journeys round the earth, the monarch Sun.  
With this I filled the ears of all my men  
From first to last. They bound me, in their turn,  
Upright against the mast-tree, hand and foot,

And tied the cords around it. Then again 215  
They sat and threshed with oars the hoary deep.

And when, in running rapidly, we came  
So near the Sirens as to hear a voice  
From where they sat, our galley flew not by  
Unseen by them, and sweetly thus they sang : — 220

“ ‘ O world-renowned Ulysses ! thou who art  
The glory of the Achaians, turn thy bark  
Landward, that thou mayst listen to our lay  
No man has passed us in his galley yet,  
Ere he has heard our warbled melodies. 225

He goes delighted hence a wiser man ;  
For all that in the spacious realm of Troy  
The Greeks and Trojans by the will of Heaven  
Endured we know, and all that comes to pass  
In all the nations of the fruitful earth.’ 230

“ ’T was thus they sang, and sweet the strain.

I longed

To listen, and with nods I gave the sign  
To set me free ; they only plied their oars  
The faster. Then upsprang Eurylochus  
And Perimedes, and with added cords 235  
Bound me, and drew the others still more tight.  
And when we now had passed the spot, and heard  
No more the melody the Sirens sang,  
My comrades hastened from their ears to take  
The wax, and loosed the cords and set me free. 240

“ As soon as we had left the isle, I saw  
Mist and a mountain billow, and I heard

The thunder of the waters. From the hands  
Of my affrighted comrades flew the oars,  
The deep was all in uproar ; but the ship 245  
Stopped there, for all the rowers ceased their task.  
I went through all the ship exhorting them  
With cheerful words, man after man, and said : —

“ ‘ Reflect, my friends, that we are not untried  
In evil fortunes, nor in sadder plight 250  
Are we than when within his spacious cave  
The brutal Cyclops held us prisoners ;  
Yet through my valor we escaped, and through  
My counsels and devices, and I think  
That ye will live to bear this day’s events 255  
In memory like those. Now let us act.  
Do all as I advise ; go to your seats  
Upon the benches, smiting with your oars  
These mighty waves, and haply Jove will grant  
That we escape the death which threatens us. 260  
Thee, helmsman, I adjure, — and heed my words,  
Since to thy hands alone is given in charge  
Our gallant vessel’s rudder, — steer thou hence  
From mist and tumbling waves, and well observe  
The rock, lest where it juts into the sea 265  
Thou heed it not, and bring us all to wreck.’

“ I spake, and quickly all obeyed my words.  
Yet said I naught of Scylla, — whom we now  
Could not avoid, — lest all the crew in fear  
Should cease to row, and crowd into the hold. 270  
And then did I forget the stern command

Which Circè gave me, not to arm myself  
For combat. In my shining arms I cased  
My limbs, and took in hand two ponderous spears,  
And went on deck, and stood upon the prow, — 275  
For there it seemed to me that Scylla first  
Would show herself, — that monster of the rocks, —  
To seize my comrades. Yet I saw her not,  
Though weary grew my eyes with looking long  
And eagerly upon those dusky cliffs. 280

“ Sadly we sailed into the strait, where stood  
On one hand Scylla, and the dreaded rock  
Charybdis on the other, drawing down  
Into her horrid gulf the briny flood ;  
And as she threw it forth again, it tossed 285  
And murmured as upon a glowing fire  
The water in a caldron, while the spray,  
Thrown upward, fell on both the summit-rocks ;  
And when once more she swallowed the salt sea,  
It whirled within the abyss, while far below 290  
The bottom of blue sand was seen. My men  
Grew pale with fear ; we looked into the gulf  
And thought our end was nigh. Then Scylla  
snatched

Six of my comrades from our hollow bark,  
The best in valor and in strength of arm. 295  
I looked to my good ship ; I looked to them,  
And saw their hands and feet still swung in air  
Above me, while for the last time on earth  
They called my name in agony of heart.

As when an angler on a jutting rock 300  
 Sits with his taper rod, and casts his bait  
 To snare the smaller fish, he sends the horn  
 Of a wild bull that guards his line afar  
 Into the water, and jerks out a fish,  
 And throws it gasping shoreward ; so were they 305  
 Uplifted gasping to the rocks, and there  
 Scylla devoured them at her cavern's mouth,  
 Stretching their hands to me with piercing cries  
 Of anguish. 'T was in truth the saddest sight,  
 Whatever I have suffered and where'er 310  
 Have roamed the waters, that mine eyes have seen.

“Escaping thus the rocks, the dreaded haunt  
 Of Scylla and Charybdis, we approached  
 The pleasant island of the Sun, where grazed  
 The oxen with broad foreheads, beautiful, 315  
 And flocks of sheep, the fatlings of the god  
 Who makes the round of heaven. While yet at sea  
 I heard from my black ship the low of herds  
 In stables, and the bleatings of the flocks,  
 And straightway came into my thought the words 320  
 Of the blind seer Tiresias, him of Thebes,  
 And of Ææan Circè, who had oft  
 Warned me to shun the island of the god  
 Whose light is sweet to all. And then I said  
 To my companions with a sorrowing heart : — 325

“ ‘ My comrades, sufferers as ye are, give ear.  
 I shall disclose the oracles which late  
 Tiresias and Ææan Circè gave.

The goddess earnestly admonished me  
Not to approach the island of the Sun, 330  
Whose light is sweet to all, for there she said  
Some great misfortune lay in wait for us.  
Now let us speed the ship and pass the isle.'

"I spake ; their hearts were broken as they heard,  
And bitterly Eurylochus replied : — 335

" 'Austere art thou, Ulysses ; thou art strong  
Exceedingly ; no labor tires thy limbs ;  
They must be made of iron, since thy will  
Denies thy comrades, overcome with toil  
And sleeplessness, to tread the land again, 340  
And in that isle amid the waters make  
A generous banquet. Thou wouldst have us sail  
Into the swiftly coming night, and stray  
Far from the island, through the misty sea.  
By night spring up the mighty winds that make 345  
A wreck of ships, and how can one escape  
Destruction, should a sudden hurricane  
Rise from the south or the hard-blowing west,  
Such as, in spite of all the sovereign gods,  
Will cause a ship to founder in the deep ? 350  
Let us obey the dark-browed Night, and take  
Our evening meal, remaining close beside  
Our gallant bark, and go on board again  
When morning breaks, and enter the wide sea.'

"So spake Eurylochus ; the rest approved. 355  
And then I knew that some divinity  
Was meditating evil to our band,



And I bespake him thus in winged words : —

“Eurylochus, ye force me to your will,  
Since I am only one. Now all of you 360  
Bind yourselves to me firmly, by an oath,  
That if ye haply here shall meet a herd  
Of beeves or flock of sheep, ye will not dare  
To slay a single ox or sheep, but feed  
Contented on the stores that Circè gave.’ 365

“I spake, and readily my comrades swore  
As I required ; and when that solemn oath  
Was taken, to the land we brought and moored  
Our galley in a winding creek, beside  
A fountain of sweet water. From the deck 370  
Stepped my companions and made ready there  
Their evening cheer. They ate and drank till thirst  
And hunger were appeased, and then they thought  
Of those whom Scylla from our galley’s deck  
Snatched and devoured ; they thought and wept  
till sleep 375

Stole softly over them amid their tears.

Now came the third part of the night ; the stars  
Were sinking when the Cloud-compeller Jove  
Sent forth a violent wind with eddying gusts,  
And covered both the earth and sky with clouds, 380  
And darkness fell from heaven. When Morning  
came,

The rosy-fingered daughter of the Dawn,  
We drew the ship into a spacious grot.  
There were the seats of nymphs, and there we saw

The smooth fair places where they danced. I called  
A council of my men, and said to them :— 386

“ ‘ My friends, in our good ship are food and  
drink ;

Abstain we from these beeves, lest we be made  
To suffer ; for these herds and these fair flocks  
Are sacred to a dreaded god, the Sun, — 390  
The all-beholding and all-hearing Sun.’

“ I spake, and all were swayed by what I said  
Full easily. A month entire the gales  
Blew from the south, and after that no wind  
Save east and south. While yet we had our bread 395  
And ruddy wine, my comrades spared the beeves,  
Moved by the love of life. But when the stores  
On board our galley were consumed, they roamed  
The island in their need, and sought for prey,  
And snared with barbed hooks the fish and  
birds, — 400

Whatever came to hand, — till they were gaunt  
With famine. Meantime I withdrew alone  
Into the isle, to supplicate the gods,  
If haply one of them might yet reveal  
The way of my return. As thus I strayed 405  
Into the land, apart from all the rest,  
I found a sheltered nook where no wind came,  
And prayed with washen hands to all the gods  
Who dwell in heaven. At length they bathed my lids  
In a soft sleep. Meantime, Eurylochus 410  
With fatal counsels thus harangued my men : —

“ ‘Hear, my companions, sufferers as ye are,  
The words that I shall speak. All modes of death  
Are hateful to the wretched race of men ;  
But this of hunger, thus to meet our fate, 415  
Is the most fearful. Let us drive apart  
The best of all the oxen of the Sun,  
And sacrifice them to the immortal ones  
Who dwell in the broad heaven. And if we come  
To Ithaca, our country, we will there 420  
Build to the Sun, whose path is o’er our heads,  
A sumptuous temple, and endow its shrine  
With many gifts and rare. But if it be  
His will, approved by all the other gods,  
To sink our bark in anger, for the sake 425  
Of these his high-horned oxen, I should choose  
Sooner to gasp my life away amid  
The billows of the deep, than pine to death  
By famine in this melancholy isle.’

“ So spake Eurylochus ; the crew approved. 430  
Then from the neighboring herd they drove the best  
Of all the beeves ; for near the dark-prowed ship  
The fair broad-fronted herd with crooked horns  
Were feeding. Round the victims stood my crew,  
And, offering their petitions to the gods, 435  
Held tender oak-leaves in their hands, just plucked  
From a tall tree, for in our good ship’s hold  
Was no white barley now. When they had prayed,  
And slain and dressed the beeves, they hewed away  
The thighs and covered them with double folds 440

Of caul, and laid raw slices over these.  
Wine had they not, to pour in sacrifice  
Upon the burning flesh ; they poured instead  
Water, and roasted all the entrails thus.  
Now when the thighs were thoroughly consumed,  
And entrails tasted, all the rest was carved 446  
Into small portions, and transfixed with spits.

“ Just then the gentle slumber left my lids.  
I hurried to the shore and my good ship,  
And, drawing near, perceived the savory steam 450  
From the burnt-offering. Sorrowfully then  
I called upon the ever-living gods :—

“ ‘ O Father Jove, and all ye blessed gods,  
Who live forever, ’t was a cruel sleep  
In which ye lulled me to my grievous harm ; 455  
My comrades here have done a fearful wrong.’

“ Lampetia, of the trailing robes, in haste  
Flew to the Sun, who journeys round the earth,  
To tell him that my crew had slain his beeves,  
And thus in anger he bespake the gods :— 460

“ ‘ O Father Jove, and all ye blessed gods  
Who never die, avenge the wrong I bear  
Upon the comrades of Laertes’ son,  
Ulysses, who have foully slain my beeves,  
In which I took delight whene’er I rose 465  
Into the starry heaven, and when again  
I sank from heaven to earth. If for the wrong  
They make not large amends, I shall go down  
To Hades, there to shine among the dead.’

“The cloud-compelling Jupiter replied : — 470  
‘Still shine, O Sun ! among the deathless gods  
And mortal men, upon the nourishing earth.  
Soon will I cleave, with a white thunderbolt,  
Their galley in the midst of the black sea.’

“This from Calypso of the radiant hair 475  
I heard thereafter ; she herself, she said,  
Had heard it from the herald Mercury.

“When to the ship I came, beside the sea,  
I sternly chid them all, man after man,  
Yet could we think of no redress ; the beeves 480  
Were dead ; and now with prodigies the gods  
Amazed my comrades, — the skins moved and  
crawled,

The flesh both raw and roasted on the spits  
Low'd with the voice of oxen. Six whole days  
My comrades feasted, taking from the herd 485  
The Sun's best oxen. When Saturnian Jove  
Brought the seventh day, the tempest ceased ; the  
wind

Fell, and we straightway went on board. We set  
The mast upright, and, spreading the white sails,  
We ventured on the great wide sea again. 490

“When we had left the isle, and now appeared  
No other land, but only sea and sky,  
The son of Saturn caused a lurid cloud  
To gather o'er the galley, and to cast  
Its darkness on the deep. Not long our ship 495  
Ran onward, ere the furious west-wind rose

And blew a hurricane. A strong blast snapped  
Both ropes that held the mast ; the mast fell  
back ;

The tackle dropped entangled to the hold ;  
The mast, in falling on the galley's stern, 500  
Dashed on the pilot's head and crushed the bones,  
And from the deck he plunged like one who dives  
Into the deep ; his gallant spirit left  
The limbs at once. Jove thundered from on high,  
And sent a thunderbolt into the ship, 505  
That, quaking with the fearful blow, and filled  
With stifling sulphur, shook my comrades off  
Into the deep. They floated round the ship  
Like seamews ; Jupiter had cut them off  
From their return. I moved from place to place,  
Still in the ship, until the tempest's force 511  
Parted the sides and keel. Before the waves  
The naked keel was swept. The mast had snapped  
Just at the base, but round it was a thong  
Made of a bullock's hide ; with this I bound 515  
The mast and keel together, took my seat  
Upon them, and the wild winds bore me on.

“The west-wind ceased to rage ; but in its  
stead

The south-wind blew, and brought me bitter grief.  
I feared lest I must measure back my way 520  
To grim Charybdis. All night long I rode  
The waves, and with the rising sun drew near  
The rock of Scylla and the terrible

Charybdis as her gulf was drawing down  
The waves of the salt sea. There as I came 525  
I raised myself on high till I could grasp  
The lofty fig-tree, and I clung to it  
As clings a bat, — for I could neither find  
A place to plant my feet, nor could I climb,  
So distant were the roots, so far apart 530  
The long huge branches overshadowing  
Charybdis. Yet I firmly kept my hold  
Till she should throw the keel and mast again  
Up from the gulf. They, as I waited long,  
Came up again, though late, — as late as one 535  
Who long has sat adjudging strifes between  
Young suitors pleading in the market-place  
Rises and goes to take his evening meal ;  
So late the timbers of my bark returned,  
Thrown from Charybdis. Then I dropped amid 540  
The dashing waves, and came with hands and  
feet

On those long timbers in the midst, that they  
Might bear my weight. I sat on them and rowed  
With both my hands. The father of the gods  
And mortals suffered not that I should look 545  
On Scylla's rock again, else had I not  
Escaped a cruel death. For nine long days  
I floated on the waters ; on the tenth  
The gods at nightfall bore me to an isle, —  
Ogygia, where Calypso, amber-haired, 550  
A mighty goddess, skilled in song, abides,

Who kindly welcomed me, and cherished me.  
Why should I speak of this? Here in these halls  
I gave the history yesterday to thee  
And to thy gracious consort, and I hate  
To tell again a tale once fully told.”

555

END OF VOL. I.